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ABSTRACT

High school noncompletion is a complex problem that requires complex solutions that schools are often inhibited from implementing quickly. Alternative educational services are often necessary for students who are able to complete high school but who find school an unrewarding place in which to learn. A loose network of public and private programs has evolved that are intended to provide noncompleters with opportunities to make a successful school-to-work transition. These include employment and training, adult literacy, and alternative high school programs. Research findings indicate that successful programs share the following characteristics: longer-term efforts as opposed to short-term, intensive preemployment counseling, a combination of training and academic assistance, emphasis on basic academic skills, self-paced or staff-intensive training, and collaborative relationships with other agencies and programs. Examples of successful intervention programs include Youth Chance in San Francisco, the Adult Education Dropout Project of Kansas City, and the Career Intern Program (an alternative high school program) that was originally established in Philadelphia. Employment and educational opportunities for dropouts could be enhanced by guaranteeing continuous funding as long as programs demonstrate success, creating a point system for increased financial rewards for programs with successful recruitment and retention records, and encouraging programs to develop linkages with community-based organizations. (MN)

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Information Series No. 316

YOUTHFUL HIGH SCHOOL NONCOMPLETERS: ENHANCING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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FOREWORD

High school noncompletion is of concern because of the prediction that serious economic and social consequences will result for individuals who fail to obtain high school diplomas and the belief that the civic and economic welfare of the nation is dependent on a universally high level of educational attainment. Programs for noncompleters benefit society and the individuals. This paper reviews the employment problems and needs of youthful noncompleters, examines important elements of exemplary educational and training programs, and offers recommendations for program replication and for enhancing employment and education opportunities.

The profession is indebted to Dr. Larry G. Martin for his scholarship in preparing this paper. Dr. Martin is Associate Professor, Department of Administrative Leadership, The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Previously, he was Assistant Professor, Department of Adult and Continuing Education, Alabama A&M University.

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Chester K. Hansen
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This monograph provides a synthesis of the learning and employment problems and needs of youthful high school noncompleters and the important elements of several exemplary educational and training programs that have published the results of successful efforts to address these needs effectively. With the public's understanding of the central role schools play in fostering economic productivity has come a concern for the existing high rates of school noncompletion (25 to 30 percent). Responding to the excellence in education reform movement, elementary and secondary school educators are being asked to make significant changes that not only inject new rigor and higher standards into their curriculum, but also simultaneously reduce the rate of noncompletion. The complex problem of high school noncompletion requires complex solutions, which schools are inhibited from implementing quickly. Therefore, alternative educational services often are necessary for students who are able to complete high school but who find school an unrewarding place to learn. Intervention for members of this population must occur before they become acclimated to adult life-styles that include involvement in deviant and antisocial activities.

A loose network of public and private programs has evolved that has as its primary purpose the provision of opportunities for noncompleters to make a successful transition from school to work. These programs include employment and training programs (occupational skills training programs, labor market preparation programs, temporary jobs programs, and job placement programs), adult literacy programs, and alternative high school programs. The case histories used to examine the programs include the origin, development, and implementation of each program and elements that promote program success.

Research findings indicate that successful programs share several characteristics:

- Longer-term efforts are used, rather than short, intensive preemployment counseling.
- Both training and academic assistance interventions are provided.
- Preparation in basic academic skills is central.
- Self-paced or staff intensive training is used.
- Collaborative relationships are established with other agencies and programs.

One successful program is Youth Chance. This San Francisco-based youth program sponsored by the YMCA and the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training is one government-sponsored program that focused on improving basic reading and math skills, providing specific job skills as well as actual work experience, developing personal and professional habits, and raising self-esteem.

Adult literacy programs differ in purposes, clients, and instructional content. They include federally funded programs for adults interested in acquiring a high school equivalency certificate, remediation courses for U.S. military recruits, church-run programs staffed by volunteers, municipal and state-run programs, and corporate inservice programs for employees.

A New York City task force found that adult basic education lends itself better than either high school or CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) programs to the needs of the nonliterate and that adult literacy programs demonstrated the benefits of mixing adults and young people for literacy instruction.

The Adult Education Dropout Project of Kansas City sought to develop a comprehensive referral system to reach recent noncompleters between the ages of 16-18. The program was successful in establishing an ongoing linkage between local high schools and the adult basic education program.

Alternative high school programs provide for flexible, individualized scheduling of educational programs, career education and job skill training, basic skills instruction, college preparatory courses, counseling, and job placement. One such program, the Career Intern Program, provided a motivating learning climate with strong academic instruction and career-oriented instruction and activities. Emphasis was on the emotional needs of each learner. The program philosophy recognized the students as trustworthy individuals and contributed to building an atmosphere that provided students with a sense of security and acceptance, thus helping to instill self-confidence.

The table of suggestions for replication in the last chapter of this monograph indicates characteristics of noncompleters and the corresponding characteristics or components of programs that address those characteristics successfully. Recommendations given for enhancing employment and education opportunities follow:

- Guarantee continuous funding from federal, state, and/or local sources as long as the programs demonstrate success.
- Create a point system for increased financial rewards for programs that successfully recruit and retain out-of-school youthful noncompleters.
- Encourage programs to develop strong formal and informal linkages with community-based organizations to address two of the major problems of youthful noncompleters: low family income and a life-style and family history of social isolation.
- Strengthen the loose network of programs that serve youthful noncompleters to form a comprehensive network of services.
- Encourage research to develop a greater understanding of the appeal of different types of programs to various segments of youthful noncompleters.

INTRODUCTION

The recent spate of studies and policy initiatives on excellence in education seems to have crystallized the public's understanding of the central role schools play in fostering economic productivity. In this light, the national high school noncompletion rates of 25 to 30 percent that once seemed quite acceptable are being increasingly viewed as highly undesirable. The burgeoning concern for what are now considered to be high rates of school noncompletion stems primarily from the prediction that serious economic and social consequences will result for those individuals who fail to obtain a high school diploma and the belief that the civic and economic welfare of the nation is dependent on a universally high level of educational attainment (Wehlage and Rutter 1986).

As elementary and secondary school educators respond to the excellence in education reform movement, they are being asked to make significant organizational and instructional changes that not only inject new rigor and higher standards into their curriculum, but simultaneously reduce the rate of noncompletion (Hamilton 1986). However, high school noncompletion is a complex and nearly intractable problem that requires equally complex solutions (Mann 1986), and schools are inhibited by many factors (restricted budgets, state regulations, union contracts, public expectations, and so forth) from changing quickly and substantially to solve problems once they have been identified and solutions have been proposed (Wehlage and Rutter 1986). Therefore, alternative educational services are often necessary for those youth who have the intellectual ability to complete high school, but find school an unrewarding place to learn. It is estimated that between 50 and 75 percent of all noncompleters have the intellectual ability to graduate from high school (Elliott and Voss 1974) and 80 percent of the youthful illiterate population can learn to read on the sixth-grade level within 18 months--soon enough to join their age-mates in other educational and training programs (Schwarz and Orgnisciak 1982). There are two broad classifications of alternative educational efforts: prevention programs that are designed to keep at-risk youth in school until they obtain a high school diploma and remedial programs that are designed to meet the educational and employment needs of out-of-school youthful noncompleters.

Out-of-school youthful noncompleters (as opposed to out-of-school graduates) face limited options for pursuing either employment opportunities or further education and training because a high school diploma or equivalency certificate is often required for entry-level jobs or to enter many postsecondary institutions and 2-year vocational training programs. Even where the requirements for such certificates are waived, the lack of literacy and computational skills needed to comprehend and manipulate the knowledge presented on the job or in educational and training programs is equally prohibitive. However, a loose network of public and private remedial programs has evolved that has as its primary purpose the provision of opportunities for noncompleters to make a successful transition from school to work. These programs vary widely in their focus, function, and funding sources; they succeed and fail in varying degrees to effectively serve the needs of this population.

You cannot make policy to solve a problem if (1) you do not know the problem exists, (2) you do not know whose job it is to fix it, or (3) you do not know how to fix it—what activities to stimulate or discourage, regulate or deregulate (Brown 1986). All these factors have militated against the development of coherent, explicit state and federal policies for the utilization of resources to address

the multiple problems of out-of-school youthful noncompleters. Twenty-nine states have established new academic enrichment programs for gifted students. However as of 1984, virtually no state passed "reform" legislation that contained specific plans to provide remediation to those who did not meet the higher standards on the first try (Mann 1986).

This monograph provides a synthesis of the learning and employment problems and needs of youthful noncompleters and the important elements of several exemplary educational and training programs that have published the results of successful efforts to effectively address these needs. It is anticipated that comprehensive examples and analyses of successful programs will help policy-makers and educational practitioners understand the significance of the various components of such programs and how these components interact to produce successful outcomes.

Review of the Literature

The literature was reviewed to achieve the following objectives: (1) identify the results of research that provide insight into the causes and consequences of high school noncompletion and the characteristics and needs of youthful noncompleters; (2) identify the types and levels of effectiveness of employment and training programs, adult literacy programs, and alternative high school programs that address the needs of youthful noncompleters; and (3) identify and describe, in detail, the interacting elements of one exemplary program that is characteristic of the efforts used by employment and training programs, adult literacy programs, and alternative high school programs to serve youthful noncompleters effectively.

A computer search was conducted to identify documents published between May 1976 and May 1986. The search used the database compiled by ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) to identify journal articles, research reports, reviews of the literature, project descriptions, and evaluative reports that discussed dropouts, disconnected youth, alienated youth, or at-risk youth and that discussed the following types of programs: adult literacy, adult basic education (ABE), basic skills, high school equivalency, or demonstration. The search yielded a 106-page annotated bibliography of 312 documents. This number of documents was reduced to a more manageable number by selecting for further review only those documents that addressed the educational and training needs of out-of-school youthful noncompleters. The search was extended by using the bibliographic references of these documents to identify other relevant literature and through articles and books referred to the author from friends and colleagues.

Criteria for Selecting Programs

The research and literature reports that discussed the causes and consequences of school noncompletion, the characteristics and needs of youthful noncompleters, and the types and levels of effectiveness of programs to meet the needs of youthful noncompleters were reviewed first. Then, criteria were developed to identify and select exemplary programs. The following criteria were established to guide the selection of programs:

- The program must serve either the educational or training needs of out-of-school youthful noncompleters who have the intellectual ability to complete high school.
- The program must have demonstrated an acceptable "retention rate" as compared with other programs of its type.

- The program must have established program components that have been identified in the literature to be necessary for a program of its type in serving the needs of youthful noncompleters.

- The program must have demonstrated a high level of effectiveness, as compared with other programs of its type, in helping youthful noncompleters achieve the following goals: completing a high school diploma or equivalency certificate; significantly improving reading, writing, or computational skills; gaining entrance into postsecondary education programs; or obtaining unsubsidized long-term employment.

- The program must demonstrate, as compared with other programs of its type, a cost-effective approach to meeting its program objectives.

- The program description must be comprehensively written so that it provides enough information to allow replication.

Twenty-six project descriptions were identified. Of this number, 20 were eliminated from further consideration because they either did not address the needs of out-of-school youthful noncompleters or did not meet the established effectiveness criteria, or the project descriptions were too limited to provide a useful guide for purposes of replication. The three project descriptions provided in the pages that follow were chosen from the six remaining descriptions.

Organization of the Monograph

This monograph is organized in five sections. The first section discusses high school noncompletion as a national problem by exploring the scope and consequences of school noncompletion. Section two provides an overview of the types and levels of effectiveness of employment and training programs and a case history of one exemplary program. Section three provides an overview of the types and levels of effectiveness of adult literacy programs and a case history of one exemplary adult basic education (ABE) program. Section four identifies the types of alternative high school programs and provides a case history of one exemplary program. Section five provides a summary of the extent to which the education and learning needs of out-of-school youthful noncompleters are currently being addressed and makes recommendations for enhancing the opportunities for the employment and education of this population.

SCHOOL NONCOMPLETION: A NATIONAL PROBLEM

When viewed in its historical context, the current noncompletion rate of between 25 and 30 percent is relatively low (Wehlage and Rutter 1986). For example, in 1900 about 90 percent of the male youth in this country did not receive a high school diploma. By 1920 the rate of noncompletion for males was still 80 percent, and it was not until the 1950s that it fell below 50 percent. By the late 1960s (the academic year 1967-68) the noncompletion rate reached its low point of 23.3 percent and began to increase incrementally until 1983 when it dropped by 1 percent to 26.1 percent (Cibulka 1986). The rate of noncompletion experienced in this decade (between 25 and 30 percent) translates into approximately 800,000-1,000,000 youth who leave school annually without completing a high school diploma (Weber 1986).

Effects of Current Trends

Previously, the labor market was able to absorb most of those with a limited education, but increasingly, as this country attempts to make the transition from an industrial to an information-based economy, the lack of a high school diploma is tantamount to a denial of employment. Those who lack basic skills, career skills, and the social skills to be successful in the workplace will likely encounter unemployment, welfare, and incarceration in this nation's jails and prisons. Several demographic and socioeconomic trends suggest some of the reasons why high school noncompletion is increasingly being viewed as both an individual and a social problem.

A Changing Economic Climate

The U.S. gross national product is approaching the $4 trillion mark, but we have lost the familiar U.S.-dominated production process markets like basic steel, textiles, clothing, and footwear. In 1950, the United States produced 80 percent of the world's cars; in 1980 it produced 30 percent. To regain its competitive vigor, the U.S. economy must explore alternative means of producing goods and services such as precision manufacturing, which requires technology-driven, flexibly produced, custom-engineered processes (Mann 1986). These processes will require workers who are literate, who communicate effectively with other employees, and who are capable of being trained and retrained in response to changing job demands (Leroy 1983). Therefore, employers are placing increasing emphasis on the educational credentials of employees (Malizio and Whitney 1984).

Decreased Job Opportunities

The trend to a better educated labor force will likely contribute to a continued deterioration of job prospects for young people who have less than a high school education. People who have not completed high school are employed mostly in low-wage, low-skill jobs that are located primarily in the blue-collar, private household, and farm occupations. However, in the future, noncompleters will have trouble finding even these types of jobs. Two factors will likely inhibit their obtaining future employment: (1) these occupations are expected to account for a decreasing share of the total jobs

that become available in the economy during the future, and (2) for the openings that do arise in these occupations, young people who do not have a high school education are likely to face growing competition from their peers who have more schooling (Weidman and Friedmann 1984).

An Aging Society

Our society is aging rapidly and is becoming more dependent economically on a smaller and increasingly undereducated and disadvantaged minority youth population. In 1950, 17 workers paid the social security benefits of each retiree. By 1992, only three workers will provide the funds for each retiree, and one of the three workers will be a minority person (Institute for Educational Leadership 1986).

The Economic Costs of Noncompleters

With a large percentage of out-of-school youthful noncompleters unemployed, how much wasted human capital can society afford? How much can governments afford? The Appalachian Regional Commission (Cox et al. 1985) estimates that noncompleters will earn $237 billion less over their lifetimes than will high school graduates. Thus, state and local governments will collect $71 billion less in taxes. Therefore, Mann (1986) estimates that governments could spend $71 billion on programs for noncompleters and still break even. He points out that the majority of inmates in jails and prisons are functionally illiterate, yet a year in jail costs three times as much ($25,000) as a year in college.

These trends indicate the need for reaching large numbers of out-of-school youthful noncompleters before they become acclimated to adult life-styles that include involvements in deviant and antisocial activities. However, to determine which strategies will be most effective, we must first understand the characteristics of youthful noncompleters and their families.

Characteristics of Noncompleters and Their Families

Most of the research on noncompleters has been based on the desire to find the causes, correlates, or motives underlying the actions of those who do not complete high school. The questions that guide the research are directed primarily at finding those characteristics or qualities of noncompleters that make them different from those who complete high school. Both social and personal attributes are analyzed to identify those that separate the noncompleters from completers. The act of noncompletion is construed as a form of social deviance, and an explanation of this deviant action is sought in the characteristics distinctive to the noncompleter group (Wehlage and Rutter 1986).

Much of what is known about the specific characteristics of noncompleters and their families has resulted from national studies using longitudinal data. The High School and Beyond (HS&B) study for the sophomore 1980 cohort provided the most recent longitudinal data in which noncompleters were systematically sampled before and after their decision to leave school. Data were obtained from approximately 30,000 sophomores attending 1,105 public and private secondary schools nationwide. Data for the HS&B study were first gathered in 1980 when the subjects were sophomores. In 1982, a follow-up questionnaire was given to the same students. Those who were noncompleters were located and asked to fill out a slightly different questionnaire.

The data from the HS&B study have been analyzed by several researchers who have asked a variety of related research questions and employed a variety of statistical procedures to generate answers to these questions. The findings generated from these studies tend to corroborate some of the findings of previous studies and to extend our insight into the ways in which the individual's personal, demographic, and family background characteristics interact with the school environment to produce the noncompleter.

Characteristics of Noncompleters

Wehlage and Rutter (1986) used discriminate analysis in order to determine how noncompleters in the HS&B study differed from (1) students who stayed in school but did not plan to attend college and (2) those students who planned to attend college. They identified two significant clusters of characteristics—Academic Achievement/Ability and Social Context of Schooling—that successfully predicted 63 percent of the noncompleters, 54 percent of the stay-ins, and 84 percent of the college bound.

Academic achievement/ability. The first function, Academic Achievement/ Ability, explained 89 percent of the variance between the groups and seemed to discriminate primarily between noncompleters and the college-bound. This function was comprised of the following variables:

- **Expected school attainment.** This variable measured how much formal schooling students expected to obtain in the future. It was the most powerful variable in discriminating among the three groups.

- **Test scores.** These were based on a battery of HS&B tests in 10th grade that included mathematics, vocabulary, language and grammar usage, science, and civics. The type of information gained from these tests was considered to be a measure both of ability and of achievement that accrues from taking standard school subjects. This variable was positively correlated with Expected School Attainment and was a distant second in discriminating power.

- **Socioeconomic status.** This measure was based on student reports of five family characteristics including father's occupation, father's and mother's education, family income, and the presence of certain household items. It was also positively correlated with Expected School Attainment, and was very close to Test Scores in discriminating power.

- **Grades.** This measure referred to the self-reported letter grades students had received in school. It was positively correlated with Expected School Attainment, and was very close to Socioeconomic Status in discriminating power.

The results of the first function suggested that the college-bound students were characterized by higher expectations, higher achievement/ability, higher socioeconomic status, and higher grades than the noncompleters. Conversely, the noncompleters were characterized by lower expectations, lower achievement/ability, lower socioeconomic status, and lower grades than the college bound.

Social context of schooling. The second function, Social Context of Schooling, accounted for 11 percent of the variance between the groups and seemed to discriminate between noncompleters and stay-ins. This function consisted of the following variables:

- **Truancy.** This measure referred to the self-reported number of school days missed when not sick.

- **Discipline.** This measure asked students about discipline problems in the past year, about being suspended or placed on probation, and about cutting classes every once in a while. Students indicated whether the statements were true or false for them.

- **Lateness.** This variable was a measure of the number of days a student was late to school.

- **Hours worked.** This measure was the self-reported number of hours a week the student worked at a job.

The results of the second function suggested that noncompleters differed from their academically similar peers in terms of their inability to function adequately in the social context of schooling, i.e., high truancy, discipline problems, lateness, and hours worked. Collectively, these two functions include many of the characteristics identified by other researchers: Alexander, Natriello, and Pallas (1985) and Weidman and Friedmann (1984). However, several other characteristics have been identified by other researchers but were either not included or were not significant in discriminating between noncompleters and the other groups in the statistical analysis conducted by Wehlage and Rutter (1986).

Less academically stimulating home and family environments. Ekstrom et al. (1986) also analyzed data from the HS&B study and compared the households of stayers and noncompleters. They found that noncompleters (1) had fewer study aids present in their homes, (2) had less opportunity for nonschool-related learning, (3) were less likely to have both natural parents living at home, (4) had mothers with lower levels of formal education, (5) had mothers with lower educational expectations for their offspring, (6) had mothers who were more likely to be working, and (7) had parents who were less likely to be interested in or to monitor both in-school and out-of-school activities.

Poor course selections and fewer credits. Weber (1986), who also analyzed the HS&B data, compared noncompleters to potential noncompleters (i.e., completers with a high probability of not completing) and attempted to define operationally their vocationally related experiences while in high school. His findings included the following:

- Noncompleters earned significantly fewer vocational credits.

- Noncompleters earned significantly fewer total credits.

- Noncompleters enrolled in fewer courses—both vocational and nonvocational—and they received significantly lower grades in those courses.

- Noncompleters earned credits in fewer vocational service areas, which suggests that they did not explore a full range of vocational offerings.

- The ratio of consumer/homemaker, industrial arts, and other "exploratory" vocational credits (as contrasted with job-specific training) earned to total credits earned was significantly greater for noncompleters.

- Significantly fewer noncompleters had a vocational specialty, i.e., a vocational service area in which they earned over 60 percent of their vocational credits.

- Noncompleters tended to earn more work-study credits and those credits tended to make up a significantly larger part of the noncompleters' programs.

- Significantly more noncompleters reported being assigned to their school programs versus choosing them themselves.

- Noncompleters reported working significantly more hours per week and earning more per hour, primarily in jobs sponsored by CETA or some other government organization rather than by private industry-business.

Minority group member. Several studies have found that noncompleters were more likely to be from a minority group, e.g., black, Hispanic, Native American, or others (Alexander, Natriello, and Pallas 1985; Weidman and Friedmann 1984). Ekstrom et al. (1986) investigated the extent to which race/ethnicity was associated with school noncompletion. They found that "other things being equal, whites and Hispanics were more likely to drop out of school than blacks. The critical control variables here are sophomore-year grades and achievement test scores" (p. 366). However, Wehlage and Rutter (1986) found that "after controlling for family background, race is not a variable that predicts dropout" (p. 375).

Other demographic characteristics. Several other demographic characteristics were found by Ekstrom et al. (1986) to be associated with school noncompletion. They concluded that noncompleters were more likely to be older, to be males rather than females, and to attend public schools in urban areas in the South or West. However, when other variables were controlled several characteristics could be distinguished more clearly:

- **Region.** Whites in the South were more likely to drop out than whites in other regions, assuming all other variables were held constant, and blacks in the South were less likely to become noncompleters than blacks in other regions.

- **Sex.** White and Hispanic males were more likely to become noncompleters than females, and black females were more likely to become noncompleters than black males.

These characteristics help to define the population of youth that do not complete high school and ultimately become identified as potential clients for remedial programs serving the education and employment needs of out-of-school youthful noncompleters. This information is important because it tells us who require these services, but it is limited information because it does not reveal why they did not complete high school (causes) or the effects of their noncompletion (consequences).

Causes of School Noncompletion

Several researchers have conducted investigations that analyzed the causes of noncompletion. However, noncompletion of high school is not the result of a single decision based on the personal attributes and perceptions of the individual. It is most likely to result from cumulative experiences over time and to involve as major actors the individual's sociocultural experiences and interactions with the school system.

Self-Reported Reasons for Noncompletion

Ekstrom et al. (1986) analyzed the HS&B data to determine "why one student rather than another drops out" (p. 362). When the sample was last contacted in 1982, noncompleters were asked their reason(s) for leaving school. They could check as many reasons as they felt were relevant. Males were more likely than females to report leaving school for several reasons: (1) poor academic

achievement, i.e., poor grades; (2) alienation from school, i.e., not liking school (These were the most frequently reported reasons for leaving school, identified by one-third of all respondents.); (3) behavior problems, i.e., not being able to get along with teachers and being expelled or suspended; and (4) economic-related issues, i.e., to help the family or to accept a job offer. Females were more likely to leave school for personal-family formation reasons, i.e., marriage and/or pregnancy.

District and School Contributions

The focus on the causes of noncompletion reported by individuals tends to divert attention away from other possible causes. The school district and the characteristics of the individual school could be major contributors to the noncompletion rates of their respective districts and schools. For example, Cibulka (1986) analyzed factors that accounted for the variation in dropout rates among Wisconsin school districts. He found that the level of school district expenditures was an important predictor of its dropout rate. Districts that spent more money per pupil tended to have lower dropout rates, when other factors such as district size, student population, and fiscal capacity were held constant.

Similarly, Hess (1986) observed that there tended to be wide variations in the noncompletion rates across urban school systems—the systems most affected by school noncompletion. He indicated that in Chicago, which had a systemwide noncompletion rate of 43 percent, individual school noncompletion rates varied between 11 percent and 63 percent. He suggested that the variation reflected varied levels of preparedness among entering students, varied program options established by local and system policy decisions, and centralized policy decisions about student distribution in the system's schools. Hess also analyzed longitudinal data taken from student records encompassing the whole universe of students in three enrolling freshmen classes of the Chicago school system.He found that those factors contributing most strongly to the noncompletion rate of an individual school were the percentage of the students entering the school with below normal reading scores and the percentage over-age. The poverty level and the percentage of Hispanic students were also significantly related to the noncompletion rate. He also found that the smaller schools (average 309 students) tended to have noncompletion rates that were about seven points lower than the system average.

The Sociocultural Backgrounds of Noncompleters

The sociocultural background of noncompleters includes many of the variables that characterize this group, e.g., fewer study aids present in the home, less opportunity to pursue nonschool learning, less likelihood of having nurturing parents who express concern for school work, and other characteristics identified by Ekstrom et al. (1986). Noncompleters' learning experiences in their home environments could be vastly different from the experiences and expectations encountered in the school setting, and these differences could contribute substantially to negative experiences in school. For example, Martin (1986a) conducted 2- to 3-hour biographical interviews with 79 adult high school noncompleters living in three U.S. geographical locations. The data were analyzed to identify each subject's retrospective, self-reported preadulthood deviant and stigmatizing experiences. Martin found that the subjects had mentioned two types of stigmatizing experiences related to their home environments: parents' marital status (78.5 percent indicated their parents experienced marital upset or were never married); and abusive parents (35.4 percent indicated that either one or both parents often drank alcohol, parents argued and fought often, parents or relatives beat them or physically abused them, or one or both parents neglected them by abandonment and/or failure to provide financial support).

Hammond and Howard (1986) argue that the sociocultural experiences of minority youth have combined with negative school experiences to produce a tendency to avoid intellectual engagement and competition, and that this tendency is a major contributor to the performance gap between minority and white youth and the attendant noncompletion rate. They question whether the self-reported reasons for noncompletion are masks of deeper underlying causes. They ask, for example, "Is the pregnancy experienced by many females who do not complete school the result of ignorance about or lack of access to birth control, or are we observing the final common pathway for young women who perceive themselves as unproductive in every arena except the reproductive?" "Do students leave school to get married or is marriage a means to leave school?" They note that similar questions can be raised in response to those students who cite job offers or the desire to travel as the proximate cause for their decision to leave school.

As can be surmised from this discussion, current research efforts to explain the causes of high school noncompletion have focused on individual elements of the problem, such as the individual noncompleters, schools and school districts, and the sociocultural backgrounds of noncompleters, but research has not systematically analyzed the interactive and cumulative effects of each contributing element. The exact nature of the relationship between the students' personal attributes, sociocultural background, and the school environment requires more research. Such research will provide more insight into the phenomenon of school noncompletion and also provide clues for offering more effective remedial programs for out-of-school youth.

Consequences of School Noncompletion

The primary purpose of school is to prepare individuals for effective functioning in society so that they can live happy and successful lives. Schools attempt to accomplish this goal by (1) preserving and transmitting organized knowledge, i.e., information on tested and accepted cause-and-effect relationships that exist in nature and in human societies, and (2) preserving and transmitting common and accepted social values regarding the behaviors and attributes that are expected of citizens. Researchers interested in testing the effects of schooling have investigated the difference between completers and noncompleters in several types of school-related outcomes: cognitive development, self-esteem and locus of control, and education and employment.

Cognitive Development

Schools not only provide students with skills in reading, writing, and computation, but also play an important role in fostering cognitive development, especially for disadvantaged minorities (Heyns 1978). The contribution of schooling to the cognitive development of youth was tested in a specific research project by Alexander, Natriello, and Pallas (1985). Using data from the HS&B study, they compared the patterns of cognitive development experienced by noncompleters and completers over a 2-year interval. They found that schooling, independent of other attributes such as motivation and habits, appeared to benefit youngsters who persisted academically by about one-tenth of a standard deviation on average. They concluded that the cognitive skills of youngsters who stayed in school improved more than those of noncompleters and that this advantage was observed across a broad range of skill areas.

In a similar study of the HS&B data, Ekstrom et al. (1986) conducted a value-added analysis to estimate the relative impact of early noncompletion (before the end of the junior year) on achievement gains as contrasted with those of later noncompleters and with stayers in each curriculum. The groups contrasted with the early noncompletion group included (1) late

noncompleters and/or early noncompleters who subsequently received additional education or training, such as formal tutoring or General Educational Development work, (2) school stayers in the general curriculum, (3) school stayers in the academic curriculum, and (4) school stayers in the vocational curriculum. Results indicated that staying in school positively affects gains in achievement and that staying in the academic or, to a lesser extent, the general curriculum leads to larger overall gains than staying in the vocational curriculum. The results also suggested that females, and to a lesser extent minorities, were relatively "bigger losers" when they left school. Blacks and females fell the furthest behind in the language development areas of vocabulary, reading, and writing when they left school early. Because females and minorities tended to take fewer high school courses in science and mathematics than did males and whites, the impact of noncompletion was less for them in these areas.

Self-esteem and Locus of Control

Wehlage and Rutter (1986) argued that implicit in the purpose of public schooling are the goals of self-development, self-management, rational decision making, and control of one's circumstances and opportunities through the acquisition of knowledge and skills. These specific goals should help students to acquire positive self-concepts and learn to take responsibility for their actions. Wehlage and Rutter (1986) analyzed data from the HS&B study to investigate the relative contribution schooling made in developing self-esteem and establishing locus of control. Self-esteem was comprised of four items with which students either agreed or disagreed on a five-point scale, e.g., "I am able to do things as well as other people." Locus of control had four items, and students were also asked to agree or disagree on a five-point scale with such statements as "Good luck is more important than work for success."

Wehlage and Rutter analyzed the responses of noncompleters both before and after they left school and compared their responses to those of the stay-ins and the college-bound. They found that students from all three status groups (noncompleters, stay-ins, and college-bound) and all three races (white, black, and Hispanic) increased their sense of self-esteem in a positive direction over the three-year period. This change was statistically significant for all the racial groups except for blacks, and in the case of blacks the change scores were similar and parallel to those changes in the comparison groups. Noncompleters began with slightly higher self-esteem than the stay-ins, and actually increased the differential by the last year of the study even though they had left school. This was true for each racial group. The overall gain in self-esteem by noncompleters was exactly the same as for the group with the greatest self-esteem, the college-bound. Those youths who were similar to the noncompleters in some respects, but who stayed in school, reported less growth in self-esteem than either the noncompleters or college-bound. They concluded that "for youth who have been receiving negative signals from the school in the form of poor grades and/or unhappy experiences with the discipline system, dropping out to a different environment is a positive experience" (p. 387).

In terms of locus of control, Wehlage and Rutter (1986) found that in general each group experienced movement toward a more internal locus of control. The amount of change varied considerably by group. College-bound Hispanics showed the largest change toward internal control, and Hispanic noncompleters showed a similar movement although they remained relatively externally oriented. While noncompleters made up some of the difference between themselves and stay-ins, they still projected a more external locus of control than did their peers. For blacks, the difference between noncompleters and stay-ins widened substantially. This suggests that if the amount of change toward internal control is used as a standard, then the data do not support the argument that noncompleters would have benefited by staying in school (except in the case of

blacks). "The dropouts begin with a significantly different orientation toward control, and it may be that school with its present reward structure cannot be expected to have much impact on this factor" (Wehlage and Rutter 1986). In this sense, noncompletion may be the appropriate decision for some youth who seek to gain a sense of control through participation in adult activities.

Education and Employment

Ekstrom et al. (1986) also analyzed the HS&B data to identify the activities noncompleters were engaged in since they left school. At the time of the follow-up survey, 47 percent of the noncompleters were working full-time or part-time, 10 percent were taking courses or participating in job training programs, 16 percent were homemakers, 3 percent were in military service, and 29 percent were looking for work. The figures varied by gender and race/ethnicity. For example, more whites and males reported working for pay than did blacks and females. During the 1980 to 1982 period, 21 percent of the noncompleters indicated that they had participated in a job training program and/or educational activities other than formal educational course work. Seventeen percent had enrolled in an educational institution, and by 1982, 14 percent reported they had obtained a General Educational Development (GED) high school equivalency certificate.

The findings of Ekstrom et al. (1986) corroborate, to some extent, the findings of other researchers who suggest that, when compared to their peers who completed high school, noncompleters tend to experience difficulty acquiring and maintaining employment. King (1978) observed that noncompleters fare poorly in the labor market. These observations were buttressed by the findings of Weidman and Friedmann (1984), who analyzed 1980 census data. They found that despite a decrease in the relative number of noncompleters within the population over the past 20 years, changes in the demands of the labor market for high levels of education and skill attainment have resulted in fewer employment possibilities for noncompleters and have decreased the likelihood of noncompleters finding work. They also noted that although researchers (Bachman, O'Malley, and Johnson 1978; and Hill 1979) have found that because of greater job seniority, employed noncompleters tend to have as high or even higher weekly earnings than employed school graduates, these generalizations hold only for young workers in their late teens and early 20s. They noted that among heads of households over age 25, those who fail to complete 4 years of high school have substantially lower family incomes (23 percent lower among whites and 28 percent lower among blacks) than those who graduate from high school. These findings suggest that the employment advantages of noncompleters tend to be a short-term effect that will likely dissipate with age.

Factors Associated with Returning to School

Few studies have been conducted to determine the factors most important to the decision by noncompleters to return to an educational environment. In one such study, Borus and Carpenter (1983) analyzed data from 1979 and 1980 interviews in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth Labor Market Experiences. They found that about one third (180,000) of the subjects, aged 14 to 22, who dropped out of school in the year between the spring of 1979 and that of 1980 had returned. Of the factors associated with returning to school, the following were statistically significant:

- Older youth were less likely to return (each additional year of age decreased the probability of returning).

- Youth expecting to attend college were more likely to return, as were those who had never married.

- Youth unable to specify a curriculum were less likely to return.

- Youth living in counties where the local government expenditures per student were over $975 were more likely to return than youth from counties where less was spent on school.

Summary

In summary, the rate of high school noncompletion appears to have stabilized at 25 to 30 percent and may increase with the increased public attention to issues involving quality in education, and the increase in policy initiatives seeking excellence in education. Because of the changing economic climate in the United States, decreased job opportunities for noncompleters, an aging work force, and the high economic costs of noncompleters, the phenomenon of noncompletion is increasingly being viewed as both an individual and a social problem.

The most recent research suggests that noncompleters possess several distinct characteristics. They tend to have low academic achievement/ability as demonstrated by low expected school attainment, low test scores, low socioeconomic status, and low grades. They are also unable to function adequately in the social context of schooling as demonstrated by high levels of truancy and tardiness, discipline problems, and working to generate income. Noncompleters tend to come from home and family environments that are less academically stimulating than those of graduates, and they tend to make poorer course selections and take fewer credits. They are more likely to be minority group members and to live in the nation's inner cities.

The causes of noncompletion have been traced to self-reported personal reasons, district- and school-related contributions, and the sociocultural backgrounds of students. However, these causes have been analyzed as discrete elements of the problem and have not been systematically investigated in terms of their interactive and cumulative contributions over time. The effects of noncompletion have been found to be wide ranging: poorer cognitive development; more limited academic preparedness in the areas of vocabulary, reading, and writing; poor self-esteem; more external locus of control; and poorer prospects for either education/training or long-term stable employment.

The noncompleters who return to school tend to be younger, expect to attend college, have never been married, and have attended school in a county that spent more than $975 per student. Those who are least likely to return to school tend to be older, are unable to specify a curriculum (lack educational goals), and have attended school in a county that spent less than $975 per student.

Out-of-school youthful noncompleters represent the client population for many employment and training programs, adult literacy programs, and alternative high school programs. These programs use a variety of approaches to attract and retain these individuals into their organized learning environments. As one might discern from this discussion, once these individuals leave the school setting it becomes increasingly difficult to recruit and retain them in educational programs. However, some programs have demonstrated that a significant proportion of these learners respond positively to educational and employment efforts that address their more pressing needs. Some of these programs will be discussed in the pages that follow.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

As indicated in the first chapter, the disparity between high school graduates and noncompleters is shown in virtually all indicators of employment success. Even those noncompleters fortunate enough to find jobs tend to experience lower earnings, work at inferior jobs that hold little promise for advancement, and/or hold jobs that offer only temporary employment. Employment and training programs represent the single consistent, comprehensive, long-term effort to augment the human capital of youthful noncompleters and to increase the magnitude and stability of their earnings (Cavin and Maynard 1985). These programs are narrowly defined as programs under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), excluding the Employment Service and Unemployment Insurance (Ginzberg 1980). They include a variety of efforts designed to accomplish several different but related goals. A brief history of these programs provides evidence of their use as major instruments of federal policy initiatives to combat unemployment and improve the employability of the most disadvantaged segments of the unemployed population.

Historical Background of Employment and Training Programs

Federal involvement in the appropriation of funds for employment and training began with the passage of the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962. The program was centrally administered by the federal government and remained in effect through the periods of sustained economic expansion experienced during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, 1961 to 1969. During the Nixon-Ford years, 1969 to 1976, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) of 1973 was passed. This program provided services through a decentralized network of local prime sponsors and was used as a primary means to mitigate the plight of persons who were unemployed as a result of the 1974-75 severe economic recession. During the Carter years, employment and training programs were used for the first time to stimulate the economy: the Youth Act of 1977 was passed and CETA was reauthorized in October of 1978. Ginzberg (1980) estimates that during a 17-year period, between 1962 and 1979, a total of $64 billion was expended on employment and training programs.

During the Reagan years, CETA was discontinued and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) was authorized. This program retained the decentralized format that began with CETA, but attempted to involve employers extensively in the identification of training needs for unemployed workers and to provide unsubsidized, private sector employment to those who completed the program. The enabling legislation mandated that 40 percent of JTPA money be spent on youth between the ages of 16 and 21.

The Development of Youth Programs

The first programs that focused primarily on serving the employment and training needs of youth (Job Corps and Neighborhood Youth Corps—NYC) were inaugurated in 1964 along with other Great Society programs of the Kennedy-Johnson period. The Job Corps was a residential program for severely disadvantaged youth, and the NYC provided work experience and income for a much wider

population of in- and out-of-school youth who might otherwise use their idle time to engage in antisocial activities. Along with the multiple titles of the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA) of 1977, these programs can be seen as one composite program involving youth (Ginzberg 1980). The programs grouped under this act ran approximately from 1978 through 1981, after which they were terminated or reorganized by the Reagan administration.

The Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act

The Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act represented a substantial and rapid increase in expenditures by the federal government on youth employment and training programs. YEDPA activities encompassed several different major types of programs. The diversity of programs was further increased by the explicit legislative injunction to test the relative efficacy of different ways of dealing with youth unemployment problems in different local contexts and the resulting substantial allocation of money to activities that were intended to demonstrate a wide variety of program concepts and to assess them. It is estimated that, over the 4-year period of YEDPA operations, about $600 million were allocated for explicit demonstration programs and their related research, which brought federal expenditure on youth programs to about $2 billion per year (Betsey, Hollister, and Papageorgiou 1985). Over 56 percent of the eligible youths participated in the programs, and as many as 60 distinct demonstrations were funded in about 300 sites.

Categories of Programs

Employment and training programs present a confusing array of goals, objectives, and service delivery approaches. Betsey et al. (1985) developed a typology for classifying the types and service categories of programs funded by the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA) of 1977 (see Table 1). This typology appears to be inclusive of most of the efforts of employment and training programs developed both before and after YEDPA. The typology identified four classifications of programmatic efforts: labor market preparation, occupational skills training, temporary jobs programs, and job placement programs.

Labor Market Preparation

Programs that focused on labor market preparation tended to be very heterogeneous in terms of their services and activities, but shared the long-term goal of preparing youths for their future work lives by improving their personal skills, knowledge, and attitudes toward the workplace. Program activities tended to range from career exploration and job search assistance to remedial education, GED preparation, and combinations of work experience and classroom training. They also varied greatly in intensity and duration, providing services to clients from 5 to 35 hours per week and from 10 weeks to 1 year.

TABLE 1

SERVICE CATEGORIES AND CLASSIFICATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

Service Category Classifications			
Labor Market Preparation	**Occupational Skills Training**	**Temporary Jobs Programs**	**Job Placement Programs**
1. Testing, assessment and employability: plan development	1. Classroom vocational skills training	1. Work Experience	1. Placement and job development
2. Counseling (personal and career)	2. On-the-job training		
3. Other preemployment: --world-of-work --basic skills --job search			
4. Vocational exploration, job rotation			
5. Remedial education, GED, English as a second language			

SOURCE: Adapted from Betsey, Hollister, and Papageorgiou (1985)

Occupational Skills Training

Occupational skills training programs sought to equip youths with specific occupational skills and knowledge as a prerequisite either to further training or job placement in a particular occupational field. Program activities included both on-the-job and classroom training in such fields as welding, drafting, carpentry, health, and computer occupations.

Temporary Job Programs

Programs that provided temporary subsidized employment for youth had been a major focus of U.S. employment and training policy (that is, until the funding of the Job Training Partnership Act). These programs sought to solve the immediate employment and income needs of

disadvantaged youth by providing them with work experience, in temporary full- and part-time jobs, which would be a basis for future employment.

Job Placement Programs

Job placement programs sought to increase the employment and earnings of youth through more efficient operation of the labor market. In order to ease the labor market exchange between potential employees and employers, they provided for youth job search assistance, career information, job placement in unsubsidized jobs, and follow-up services. Although some of them were freestanding agencies that offered only job placement, they were often components of other, more comprehensive programs.

As this typology indicates, youth programs are usually developed to address an array of the needs of youthful noncompleters and often provide a wide variety of program design formats. However, the major outcomes of the programs have been reduced to four primary benefits. A report by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (1980) summarized the potential benefits to be derived from participation in such programs as follows:

- **Direct output from the labor of participants.** The extent of output depends on the skill and ability of participants, the emphasis on output versus worksite learning, the degree of supervision and discipline, the inputs of capital and equipment, and the types of work that are being performed.

- **Income transfer.** Where work experience is targeted on youth from low income families who would otherwise be unemployed, there is an income transfer effect as well as an equalization of employment probabilities. The more disadvantaged the participant, the more likely that the wages paid for work exceed productivity and that there will be an indirect income transfer contained in the wage, and the more likely that the participants would have been otherwise unemployed, thereby increasing the net employment impact.

- **In-program benefits from work experience.** Work keeps youth constructively occupied and helps them avoid the dislocation that might impede subsequent progress in the labor force. Additionally, jobs may teach about the world of work and its demands, which could help participants to gain job-holding and job-seeking skills.

- **Postprogram effects of work experience.** The types of postprogram effects will vary with the goals and design formats of the programs. Where work is tied to permanent jobs and to entry tracks into career employment, the outcomes could be access to jobs that pay higher wages and provide for increased job stability and upward mobility. If the work experience emphasizes behavior modification or world-of-work exposure, then former participants would presumably compete more effectively in the labor market and there would be an impact on labor force participation and employment chances, and perhaps some reduction in antisocial behavior. If training and education are the focus, youth might be more inclined to return to or complete school and advanced training.

Effectiveness of Employment and Training Programs

Much of what we know about the effects of different types of employment and training programs on the needs of out-of-school youthful noncompleters has resulted from federally sponsored

demonstration projects such as the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA). An extensive evaluation of the effectiveness of YEDPA was conducted by Betsey, Hollister, and Papageorgiou (1985), who conducted in-depth evaluative reviews of 28 project evaluation reports submitted by programs (including both demonstration projects and regular youth programs) funded under this entitlement. They reported findings and conclusions in two categories important to this discussion: the effectiveness of different types of programs and the effectiveness of the overall project.

Effectiveness of Different Types of Programs

The authors reported several relevant findings and conclusions regarding the effectiveness of occupational skills training programs, labor market preparation programs, temporary jobs programs, and job placement programs.

Occupational skills training programs. The authors reported findings regarding two types of occupational skills training programs: Job Corps (a residential program) and nonresidential programs. They found that, on the average, for up to 3-1/2 years after participation, Job Corps enrollees earned 28 percent more per year ($567 in 1977 dollars) and worked 3 weeks more per year than nonparticipants. In addition, participation reduced receipt of welfare and unemployment benefits by 2 weeks and 1 week per year, respectively. Participation in Job Corps also increased the probability that Job Corps enrollees would receive high school diplomas or high school equivalency diplomas such as the GED. The probability was .24 for participants compared with .05 for nonparticipants. Moreover, the authors found that Job Corps participation resulted in a decrease in criminal activity, as indicated by rates of arrest during program participation and decreases in seriousness of crime in the postprogram period. The report concluded that the benefits of Job Corps participation in terms of increased employment and earnings and decreased crime and transfer payments exceeded the costs by a sizable margin ($2,300) per enrollee.

In terms of the effectiveness of other occupational skills training programs, the authors found that YEDPA produced no reliable evidence of the effectiveness of occupational skills training provided in a nonresidential setting for out-of-school youths generally or for the severely disadvantaged population of out-of-school youths served by the Job Corps.

Labor market preparation programs. The authors were particularly troubled by the fact that the term "out-of-school youths" was used by staffs of labor market preparation programs to refer to high school graduates as well as noncompleters, and that the evaluation reports did not produce a separate analysis of the programs' effects for the two groups. However, they concluded that YEDPA programs providing labor market preparation for out-of-school youths resulted in some positive effects on employment in the 3-6 months following program participation. They found that there were no reliable data to determine whether the short-term gains were sustained over the long run or whether such programs had any effects on educational attainment or other goals, such as reduced crime and substance abuse.

Temporary job programs. The authors found that temporary job programs for out-of-school youths were effective in increasing participants' employment and earnings during the period of program participation. They suggested that subsidized jobs programs for out-of-school youths can be effectively operated in the public and private sectors, though substantially more effort is required to enlist private sector employers. Such jobs need not be "make-work" but can produce output that has positive social and economic value. In terms of raising the postprogram employment and earnings of participants over what they would have been without the experience, the authors found

that an evaluation of Supported Work (a program that served a severely disadvantaged segment of youthful noncompleters) provided strong evidence of neither long-term gains in employment and earnings or in educational attainment, nor reduction in crime or alcohol and drug use.

Job placement programs. The findings and conclusions of Betsey, Hollister, and Papageorgiou (1985) on the effectiveness of job placement programs for out-of-school youths were based on the evaluation of two projects: 70001 and the Job Factory. The 70001 program served disadvantaged youths, both in-school and out-of-school, and provided stipends. The authors concluded that these programs were effective in increasing employment for the first year after program participation. This effect dissipated gradually and disappeared entirely by two years after program participation.

Overall Findings and Conclusions

The authors reported four conclusions that coincided with the goals of YEDPA. First, a major achievement of YEDPA was that it succeeded in providing large numbers of disadvantaged youth with jobs that were more than make-work. The program demonstrated the capacity of the employment and training system to mount and run large-scale jobs programs for young people. Second, rapid program expansion in a period of considerable social program activity severely hampered the planning, implementation, and evaluation of YEDPA demonstration research. The abrupt halt of research activity in 1981 did not help. As a result, despite the magnitude of the resources ostensibly devoted to the objectives of research and demonstration, there is little reliable information on the effectiveness of the programs in solving youth employment problems. Third, despite YEDPA efforts to improve the service delivery system, employment and training services for youths remain economically, socially, and racially isolated from the larger society and its institutions. This isolation has stigmatized the programs and undercut their ability to recruit staff, motivate participants, and involve employers. Fourth, the relationship between the employment and training system and the school system remains problematic. Despite some common objectives and client groups, as well as efforts to bring the two systems together in the service of those objectives and clients, they remain largely separate, and the potential benefits of mutual efforts are largely unrealized. In addition, because of problems in recruiting and serving noncompleters—who face the most serious employment problems—the focus of youth research and demonstration under YEDPA was unduly directed to in-school youths and high school graduates. As a result, the question of how to reach and serve youthful noncompleters remains unanswered.

Attributes of Successful Programs

Research (e.g., Catholic University of America 1984; Weidman and Friedmann 1984) analyzing the needs of youthful noncompleters and the components of both successful and unsuccessful work programs tends to indicate that the more successful programs share several characteristics:

- **Longer-term.** The longer-term efforts tend to contribute to longer-term results. Those programs that operated for short terms and concentrated on a brief, intensive period of preemployment counseling tended to yield high placement ratios in the short term, but the positive results tended to evaporate after 6 to 18 months.

- **Use of both training and educational intervention.** The best long-term gains came from programs that provided a comprehensive variety of academic assistance interventions and training approaches. Work experience or any other form of intervention, when done separately, did not adequately meet the broad range of needs presented by noncompleters and other at-risk youth.

- **Academic preparation.** Preparation in basic academic skills, especially for noncompleters or persons who were likely to become noncompleters, was central to the success of the program. When academic preparation was combined with skill training as a part of a comprehensive program, it was the single factor most likely to reduce joblessness and increase the earnings potential of an individual over his/her lifetime.

- **Individualized or staff intensive training/education.** Self-paced training was more expensive than group methods, but it produced substantial payoffs. The goal was to allow participants to improve their skill levels progressively, at their own pace.

- **Collaboration with other agencies and programs.** The development of collaborative relationships among agencies and programs interested in the youth population, e.g., schools, job trainers, private employers, and others, provided a source of referral for potential clients and job placement sites for trainees who had completed the program. Also, such relationships often resulted in a smooth transition for troubled youth who required the special services, e.g., counseling, one-on-one tutoring, and so on, offered by such agencies and programs.

During the literature review, several worthwhile employment and training programs were identified that appeared to demonstrate how the preceding attributes can be combined into a functional entity. However, many of these programs did not include comprehensive program descriptions of their efforts. One program did provide a comprehensive description and appeared to possess the attributes of a successful program. This program is presented in more detail in this section so that readers who are interested in replicating it or using it as a model can analyze its functional elements and understand how these elements interact with other elements to comprise a successful program.

Youth Chance: An Employment and Training Program

Lesser and Ogden Associates (1980) provide a detailed description of Youth Chance, an effective occupational skills training program that used a comprehensive approach to integrating the necessary components of a successful youth employment and training program. The program attempted to link the overall goal of improving youth employability to a set of more concrete objectives that focused on such factors as improving basic reading and math skills, providing specific job skills as well as actual work experience, developing the personal and professional habits necessary to see an undertaking through from start to finish, and raising self-esteem.

Youth Chance was an experimental, San Francisco-based youth program that had been in operation since March 1978. It was sponsored by the YMCA, but was funded primarily by the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training and received supplemental funds from two philanthropic foundations. As a Title IV-A Youth Community Conservation and Improvement Program (YCCIP), Youth Chance was categorized as a "sweat program," i.e., a program designed to get youths off the street by involving them in community work projects for four hours a day, which coincided with the guidelines implicit in YCCIP funding. This funding formula presumed that participants would learn best by doing rather than by being taught; therefore, it allocated 65 percent of the project money to youth salaries and left 35 percent to cover materials, supervision, and other costs, with a maximum of 5 percent for administration.

The program focused on occupations such as carpentry, painting, and landscaping, i.e., jobs that require a minimum of classroom skills. To obtain cooperation from the appropriate unions, and to avoid competing with existing training programs, Youth Chance established ties with the local

Building and Construction Trades Council, which also promised to absorb a certain portion of the program's graduates into its apprenticeship programs. The benefits of the program included generating income for the youthful participants, furnishing free labor to community agencies (salaries and administrative costs of the program were paid through CETA), and providing youth who might never have held jobs in the past with ongoing work experience. The long-range goal of the program was to improve the overall "employability" of these youth and thereby increase their chances of obtaining unsubsidized employment in the future.

Youth Chance trained unemployed youth, between 16 and 19 years of age, who met the CETA requirements regarding family size and annual income. On average the program served more males (about 75 percent) than females, and more minorities (about 92 percent) than Caucasians. For example, during the second cycle of the program, 41 percent of the participants were black, 35 percent were Hispanic, 14 percent were Asian, and 1 percent were Native American. About 15 percent of the participants were ex-offenders, 75 percent were high school noncompleters, and 80 percent had never held a job before. Students were referred to the program from a large number of agencies, including Youth for Service, Apprenticeship Opportunity Foundation, American Indian Center, Mission Hall, and the local school district. Unlike many other employment and training programs, Youth Chance offered a comprehensive program in both worksite training and classroom education, for which it maintained its own private high school on a budget of $25,676.

The program practiced an open admissions/tight regulations policy in which participants were given a chance to prove their seriousness and were excluded only after repeated failures. It imposed and enforced clear, stringent rules that were presented to students at the start of each cycle; for example, students must come on time, they cannot be high (e.g., intoxicated), they must act like adults, and so forth. Each participant was allowed to be absent or tardy without an excuse a certain number of times; after that, a student was placed on probation and then terminated if the problem persisted.

The participants spent 4 hours a day, 4 days a week, working at a site in their particular area of training. The worksite "employers" consisted primarily of nonprofit community organizations that had to pay for materials but received the Youth Chance labor at no cost. Participants were paid $3.50 to $4.25 per hour. They worked under the supervision of a trained supervisor (one for each job area) and a number of appointed crew chiefs (consisting of exemplary students in the program), but the work itself involved a substantial amount of independence.

When they were not working, many of the students attended classes 4 days a week for 2 hours each day. This time was unpaid, but for those who lacked basic skills, school attendance was required if they wanted to be eligible for work. Outside of job hours, participants also met with their counselors and engaged in job searches. On Fridays, they attended job development workshops, listened to guest speakers, went on field trips, and attended monthly evaluation meetings.

Each Youth Chance cycle lasted 6 to 9 months. Not all students started at the same time, and some were held over into the next cycle. At the time the project description was written, the program was into its third cycle, having served about 265 youth (119 in the first cycle, 86 in the second, and 60 in the third, counting carryovers), of whom about 124 were enrolled in the classroom component. Youth Chance provided about $600,000 in free work to community agencies by completing more than 80 projects. The budget for the third cycle was $212,916, which did not include the cost of the educational component that was funded by two philanthropic foundations and budgeted at $25,676.

The Educational Component

The educational component was designed to enhance the students' abilities to achieve higher levels of employability, academic goals, self-image, and skill levels, and was considered by many of the staff and other individuals connected with the program to be vital to the success of the entire project.

Employability. The high school taught not only the skills necessary to obtain work (e.g., reading directions or using fractions), but also the self-discipline necessary to hold a job. Frequent cooperation between the school setting and the work setting often produced instructive and applicable activities for the students. For example, the authors noted that one student who had already passed the General Educational Development (GED) test but was still working in the landscaping unit used the educational component to study more advanced math and to read independently about horticulture.

Academic goals. For many of its students, Youth Chance made education seem accessible and palatable for the first time in years. For example, several students from each cycle who did not get a full-time job on completion of the program elected to return to public school, which demonstrated their ability to conquer their previous aversion to education. Over the course of two program cycles, about 5 students passed high school equivalency exams and 14 others received high school diplomas from the Youth Chance High School; several graduates made plans to go on to community college.

Self-image. Although the report did not indicate the use of an objective measure of self-esteem, it suggested that as students succeeded in increasing their employability and meeting their academic goals, they began to feel more self-confident. Teachers provided close attention and honest criticism, which helped students to see themselves more clearly and made them feel more worthy of attention. Being in a work situation created some of this feeling, but teachers had a far more intimate relationship with their students and were better able than supervisors to attend to individual needs.

Skill levels. Pre- and posttest results indicated that in one educational cycle the Youth Chance students improved an average of 11 months in terms of grade level—9 months in reading, and 13 months in mathematics. When this classroom time was compared to time spent at the public schools, Youth Chance students improved nearly one full grade level in one-fifth of a normal school year—and at a cost of only about $700 per student. However, the specific instruments used to measure reading and math ability were not reported.

Background and Program of the Educational Component

The educational component was added soon after the program had started. The staff discovered that the high school noncompleters who enrolled in Youth Chance frequently lacked the basic academic and survival skills necessary to obtain employment and maintain themselves on the job. Originally, it was intended to coordinate classroom learning with on-the-job training; that is, classroom instruction would be based heavily on the kinds of knowledge required for carpentry, painting, and horticulture. However, because of the low percentage of students who elected to go into the trades and the potential for duplicating union training, administrators decided to broaden the base of the program.

At the time the project description was written, the educational component had become a high school, that is, after a Private School Affidavit was filed with the California Board of Education.

Therefore, the program had the authority to award credits for classroom work and on-site training and to grant high school diplomas. Although the school was not yet accredited, it did intend to seek accreditation if funds became available.

During the first 20-week cycle, the educational component did not attract a great majority of the Youth Chance participants, perhaps because students received no remuneration for the hours spent in class. During the second cycle the program strengthened the regulations governing tardiness and absence, and attendance increased from 31 to 57 students (or 74 percent of Youth Chance participants). In its third cycle, the Youth Chance High School had a teaching staff of 3 and served 36 students. Each teacher conducted two classes per day, which ensured a six-to-one student/teacher ratio. Classrooms were rented from a private agency, and the space was converted to classrooms by Youth Chance students who did the construction and painting themselves. Youth Chance students also had access to other nearby educational facilities and materials.

Upon entering the program, every participant took the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to determine his or her level of proficiency. Students who needed classroom instruction were then placed according to their skill levels in one of three classes: Remedial (below fifth-grade reading level), Intemediate (between fifth- and seventh-grade level), and Advanced (above seventh grade). After taking the TABE, students met individually with the educational coordinator and with their teacher to plan an appropriate course of study. The student could aim at obtaining either a high school diploma or passing a high school equivalency test, such as the GED or the California High School Proficiency Exam.

The curriculum for each student would vary depending on skill levels and individual interests, but it usually included the following:

- reading, using specially designed readers, vocabulary workbooks, SRA kits (published by Science Research Associates), mimeographs, and other materials
- mathematics, with emphasis on functional math skills, especially those that pertained to the students' work
- some selection from social studies, including U.S. history, sociology, social psychology, consumer economics, and political science
- some selection from science, including health, safety, biology, chemistry, and physics

Each student also received training in such survival skills as how to use want ads, how to read the newspaper, how to use the telephone, how to follow directions, how to fill out job applications, and others.

The program attempted to show students that education is necessary for employment and attempted to make education more relevant by tying it to job-related skills. In addition, supervisors, teachers, and counselors met frequently to discuss individual students. Thus, they had an overview of a student's entire situation, which helped them to understand what might be preventing the student from performing well at any given time. With comprehensive supervision, it was less likely that a student would lose interest or drop out suddenly and inexplicably.

Measurement of Outcomes

The most objective measure of the program's short-term effectiveness in achieving its stated goals is the number of students who succeeded in getting unsubsidized jobs when they completed the program. At the end of the first cycle, 51 of 119 participants (or 43 percent) had positive terminations; that is, they were placed in unsubsidized employment, school, or another CETA program. The second cycle had 86 participants; of these, 22 (or 25 percent) had positive terminations. A follow-up evaluation of employed Youth Chance participants indicated that their ability to keep their jobs is comparable to that of participants in other successful youth programs, and employers suggested that the graduates were good employees. They were enthusiastic about working, well able to handle the job skills demanded of them, and, when the job was in their field of training, better trained than other entry-level workers.

ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS

Four major national adult literacy efforts now exist (Kozol 1985). One is the U.S. government's official program, Adult Basic Education, which originated with the passage of the Adult Education Act of 1966. This federally funded program is the largest program in existence and is directly or indirectly responsible for the development of several types of adult literacy programs: Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), and Adult Performance Level (APL). These programs differ primarily in their purposes, clients, and instructional content. Adult basic education is intended to serve the learning needs of an estimated 25 million adult illiterates, i.e., those who read between grade levels 0 and 8; adult secondary education is intended to serve the needs of about 72 million functionally illiterate adults, i.e., those adults who read between grade levels 8 and 12. These programs serve the same basic purpose—to enhance the learners' reading, writing, computing, and thinking skills so that they can acquire a high school equivalency certificate. Therefore, a large percentage of persons who enroll in ASE programs do so with the intention of taking and passing the General Educational Development (GED) test, which is administered by the American Council on Education. Neither program provides a clearly defined curriculum and both rely heavily on commercially published instructional materials. The programs are usually staffed by part-time teachers, a full-time administrator, and volunteer tutors. Federal funding for literacy programs, after 17 years of incremental growth, has been frozen at $100 million annually for the past 5 years and therefore, in constant dollars, has diminished. Adult programs also receive funding from other sources including state and local governments.

Adult performance level programs grew out of a research initiative sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education (USOE). The APL study was conducted from 1971 to 1975 to specify the competencies necessary for success in adult life and to develop devices to measure those competencies. The study claimed to have provided a new approach to the definition and measurement of outcomes in ABE. The APL approach identified outcomes through studies of adult life rather than through high school subject matter. The necessary competencies of adult life were translated into instructional objectives that formed the basis for the curriculum offered in APL classes. APL tests have also been developed to measure the extent to which the competencies have been mastered by students. Proponents of APL argue that the outcomes (competencies) measured by the APL tests differ from those measured by the GED. However, an extensive test of this assertion by Cervero (1981) found that the assumption of no relationship between the APL and GED tests is untenable. The staffing and funding patterns of these programs closely resemble those of ABE and ASE programs.

A second major effort is the U.S. military's program of remediation for its own recruits. The military seldom accepts a person reading at below the fifth-grade level. Together, the federal program and the military program reach between two and three million people annually.

Two other programs are both privately supported. Laubach Literacy International serves annually about 50,000 people and Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) serves about 20,000. These and several church-run programs make extensive use of volunteer tutors, teacher-made materials, and are located in close proximity to the clients they serve. Therefore, they do effective work with those they reach.

There also exist municipal and state-run programs, for example, the $1 million program recently begun in Boston to reach a population of 200,000 semiliterate or illiterate adults, or the California Literacy Campaign, a statewide program that allocates $2.5 million for a nonreading population of at least 5 million (Kozol 1985).

Several corporations provide inservice literacy help for some of their employees. However, Kozol (1985) indicates that only 1 percent of all funds spent for training of employees by American corporations has gone to basic math and reading/writing skills as opposed to skills required to perform a narrow task.

Effectiveness of Adult Literacy Programs

Although the International Reading Association ("Literacy Is Economic" 1979) estimated that the benefits of adult literacy programs outweigh their costs by a ratio of six to one, the programs have consistently enrolled annually fewer than 5 percent of their targeted clients (National Advisory Council on Adult Education 1977) and have been plagued with high rates of absenteeism and attrition that average 40 to 60 percent (Cain and Whalen 1979). When "separation" (i.e., incompletion) statistics were analyzed, Kozol (1985) found that 40 percent of those who enter ABE were "separated." Only 30 percent of those who left the programs prior to completion did so because they had achieved their goals. Other reasons given for separation included inconvenient scheduling of classes, physical distance causing transportation problems, change of address, conflicts with employers, lack of interest, and others. With the possible exception of employer conflicts, these reasons for separation closely resemble those given for high school noncompletion and suggest that individuals who failed to complete high school will likely fail to complete their learning goals in adult literacy programs.

Martin (1986b, forthcoming) argued that one of the primary reasons for the inability of adult literacy programs to enroll and retain noncompleters is the perception that all such adults form a singular monolithic population. That is, the structure of the learning environments to which noncompleters are exposed is based on criteria derived from academic sources and assumes that all such adults possess sufficient time, income, interest, motivation, psychological fortitude, and physical energy to pursue learning in a structured environment.

From a research project involving extensive biographical interviews with 79 noncompleters, Martin (1986b, forthcoming) produced a typology of life-style classifications (see Table 2) that statistically differentiated the demographic and attitudinal dispositions of the subjects. The criteria for the categorization of subjects was based on the subjects' "means of financial support" and degree of "socially acceptable behavior." The subjects' means of financial support produced five categories of subjects who demonstrated socially acceptable behavior: owners of private businesses (entrepreneurs); managers of businesses or organizations (superiors); employed skilled and semiskilled workers (regulars); recipients of an indirect means of financial support (suppliants); and recipients of public assistance (marginals). Three classifications of subjects were identified who demonstrated antisocial behavior: underclass-regulars, underclass-suppliants, and underclass-marginals. Although the underclass categories shared the means of financial support with the other categories, they differed in the extent to which they demonstrated a commitment to antisocial behaviors, i.e., patterns of involvement with rehabilitative social institutions such as jails, prisons, mental health institutions, and so forth, as punishment or treatment for such deviant activities as crime, illicit drug use, alcohol abuse, and others.

TABLE 2

TYPOLOGY OF LIFE-STYLE CLASSIFICATIONS OF ADULT HIGH SCHOOL NONCOMPLETERS (AHSN-Cs)

Means of Financial Support	Life-Style Classifications: Socially Acceptable Behavior	Life-Style Classifications: Antisocial Behavior
Own Business	Entrepreneurs	
Supervisor/Managerial Position	Superiors	
Blue Collar Skilled/ Semi-Skilled Jobs	Regulars	Underclass-Regulars
Indirect Means of Financial Support	Suppliants	Underclass-Suppliants
Recipients of Public Assistance	Marginals	Underclass-Marginals

SOURCE: Martin (1986b)

Martin (forthcoming) suggested that these life-style classifications appear to be highly correlated with the motivational orientations and perceptions of the individuals in each classification. The classifications appear to have two primary implications for improving the education and training opportunities of both out-of-school adults and youthful noncompleters. First, they provide a framework for targeting more precisely the different segments of youthful noncompleters according to their readily identifiable demographic characteristics. Martin (ibid.) found that these characteristics appear to be highly correlated with the learning needs and interests of the different segments of learners (i.e., the typology was predictive of their similar life experiences, motivations to learn, and adult roles and responsibilities). For example, youthful noncompleters who were classified as marginals or suppliants would likely be parents, need financial assistance, be interested in career information and family-related issues, and have both the time and energy to pursue an organized learning program. Second, the classifications could facilitate more effective programming decisions and promotional strategies that could be developed in response to the motivational orientations of the different segments of learners. These can affect administrative decisions, instructional and counseling strategies, and selection of course content. For example, marginals and suppliants would likely respond favorably to community-based programs offered during the morning or afternoon hours, whereas regulars would be more interested in evening courses that would not conflict with job schedules.

Youthful noncompleters represent a developing client population for adult literacy programs, yet adult literacy educators appear to have some reservations about fully committing program resources to meeting the learning needs of this group. However, a task force that studied the efforts of educational and training programs in New York City to meet the

educational needs of youth found that the program mandate of ABE lends itself better than either high school or CETA to the needs of the nonliterate and that the programs demonstrated the benefits of mixing adults and young people for literacy instruction (Schwarz and Orgnisciak 1982). They recommended that the city take advantage of the leadership and expertise developed within ABE to develop jointly sponsored and staffed programs attended by both youth and adults.

One of the major problems faced when attempting to meet the learning needs of youthful noncompleters is the quick identification and referral of potential students from the traditional high schools. One ABE program that made a successful effort to recruit and serve the learning needs of youthful noncompleters was identified in the literature. An in-depth case history of this program is presented below.

Adult Education Dropout Project

The Adult Education Dropout Project was a 310 (funds provided through the Adult Education Act) demonstration project that was conducted in Kansas City, Missouri (Long 1981). The program was established with the aim of diminishing the youthful high school noncompleter population by establishing an ongoing linkage between local high schools and the adult basic education programs. The project had two primary goals: (1) to develop a system of dropout identification, contact, and referral from the secondary school to the adult basic education program for young adults 16 to 24 years of age, and (2) to collect and correlate data on those young adults and to share the results of the study with educators of all levels.

The need for a project of this type became evident when a study conducted by the Adult Dropout Project staff showed that only 10 percent of the high school noncompleters who had been out of school for less than a year were enrolled in adult basic education classes, compared to 26 percent of those who had been out of school for more than a year. Therefore, the project sought to develop a comprehensive referral system in order to reach recent noncompleters between the ages of 16 and 18. However, any student 16 to 24 years of age who was identified and referred by a high school counselor, principal, or home-school coordinator was accepted into the program.

The Referral System

The project developed a comprehensive identification and referral system in order to offer the ABE program as an alternative to high school students who had made the decision to drop out of school. The system placed the responsibility of identification, contact, and referral on secondary personnel, ABE personnel, and other individuals who work with young adults. The success of the system depended on the cooperation and incorporation of a diverse group of individuals and organizations.

Identification and direct referral by counselors. Each student who had an exit interview with his/her high school counselor was informed of the ABE program. During the interview, the student was given materials that described the program, the name of a contact person, and a "High School Dropout Referral Form." (See Appendix.) The counselor then provided follow-up by telephoning the Adult Dropout Project with the name and telephone number of the student who had been referred. If the student did not come to the ABE class, he/she was contacted by

telephone (or by mail if no telephone number was available) by a staff member of the Adult Dropout Project.

Identification and direct referral by home school coordinator. A school district policy required that when students were absent over a long period of time or were having problems outside the high school that made attendance difficult, they should be referred by the counselors to home-school coordinators. Many of these students were identified by the home-school coordinators as dropouts and were referred to ABE classes. In most cases, home-school coordinators actually brought these students to the ABE site and assisted them in enrolling. In addition, they often maintained contact with and provided follow-up on the students after they enrolled.

Identification by ABE instructors and referral by high school counselors or principals. Some students did not officially withdraw from the high school. Instead, they just quit attending and were eventually dropped because of nonattendance. However, many of these students came to the ABE program to enroll. After interviewing each student, the ABE instructor was able to identify him/her as a noncompleter. Once the noncompleter was identified, the former high school counselor was contacted and a "Dropout Referral Form" was requested. If the counselor was in accord with the student's decision to withdraw, a referral form was forwarded.

Identification and direct referral by other school district alternative programs. Through the Adult Dropout Project, open communication was established with various school district alternative programs so that direct referrals from these programs were frequent. When students entered any of these programs, they were counseled and referred to the most suitable alternative avai1able. Those noncompleters who would be able to benefit from the ABE program were referred to the Adult Dropout Project for further counseling and class replacement.

Identification and direct referral by outside agencies. Agencies outside the school district that work with young adult noncompleters were also encouraged to make direct referrals to the ABE program. When noncompleters were identified, their names were referred to the Adult Dropout Project and a schedule was established. The student was then referred to an ABE class.

Developing the Referral System

The Adult Dropout Project attempted to develop an effective referral system that could be continued by using only existing staff; therefore, methods had to prove both "people effective" and "cost efficient" to be included in the final system. The key to establishing the system appeared to be the active involvement of educational personnel of all levels. The project was presented in a manner that allowed the ABE program to be viewed as another link in the educational chain and in a cooperative rather than a competitive manner. Understanding the mutual goals of the educational programs involved was essential. The following activities were useful in developing the system:

Conducting meetings with counselors and principals at the secondary school to discuss the ABE program and to distribute materials. The school administrator was contacted early in the year, and a meeting with the principal and counselors was requested. At the meeting, packets of materials were distriuted and the Adult Education program was described. The packet of materials that had been developed through the Adult Dropout Project included referral forms, statement of purpose forms, progress report forms, telephone scripts, and other pertinent information. (See Appendix.)

Involving secondary personnel on the advisory board. An advisory board was used to strengthen the links between the secondary school, ABE, and the community. The board provided valuable input into the operation of the total program. For example, after serving on the board, members became active referral sources and opened doors that helped to reach other counselors and secondary school personnel.

Providing opportunities for secondary school personnel to visit the ABE site(s). Meetings were regularly scheduled at the Adult Learning Center site to bring secondary school personnel closer to the ABE program. Home-school coordinators were also encouraged to bring potential students to the Learning Center, and tours of the classroom were available. Occasionally, a special invitation was sent to each school to ask a representative to attend, and a follow-up call was made to encourage a counselor to come. Allowing the counselors the opportunity to see their former students successfully continuing their education was considered to be one of the most effective tools used to build a linkage system.

Developing an ongoing system of feedback to secondary school personnel. A system was developed whereby counselors would receive a quarterly progress report on their former students. A progress report form was developed by the Adult Dropout Project staff (see Appendix) and was sent to ABE teachers each quarter. The instructors were asked to list all students 16-18 years of age who had been referred by a district high school. The instructor returned the completed form to the Adult Dropout Project office and the secretary compiled the lists and sent copies to each individual. Counselors noted that this report was one of the most useful and valuable of the Adult Education Dropout Project.

Keeping lines of communication open with secondary personnel by using frequent memos and telephone contacts. Frequent memos outlining important events or statistical results were sent to the secondary schools. Open communication was maintained to ensure that the linkage system remained solid.

Measurement of Outcomes

During the 1980-81 fiscal year, a total of 316 referrals were made to the Adult Dropout Project by secondary personnel and other agencies. This represented a 100 percent increase over the previous year, and accounted for about 25 percent of the students who terminated participation in district schools that year. Of the referrals, about 75 percent enrolled in ABE classes; therefore, 20 percent of the students who withdrew from high school really did not terminate their participation, but chose to continue their education in an alternative program, ABE.

In the ABE program, there were 23 classes open for noncompleter referral. The classes were open during the day and evening hours, thereby providing flexible scheduling so that students could continue working or actively seeking employment, or arrange for child care, thus eliminating some problems that caused students to withdraw from traditional high school. Classes were open throughout the district to eliminate transportation problems.

The largest concentration of students (285) was referred to and enrolled at the Adult Learning Center, and 54 were enrolled in satellite classes. Of the students who enrolled at the Adult Learning Center, 66 percent completed 12 hours of instruction, and of those enrolled in satellite classes, 48 percent completed 12 hours of instruction.

With the large influx of youth enrolling at the Adult Learning Center, a special class was created for the 16-18 year olds. The rationale for the division was based on two hypotheses: (1) older adults tend to prefer a quieter environment (young adults have a higher energy level that tends to lead to more activity and a natural increase in the noise level), and (2) young adults feel more comfortable in a class made up essentially of their peers. Breaks and other activities were conducted concurrently so that the younger adults would have the opportunity to talk with the older adults and gain from their experience.

Of the Adult Dropout students who completed 12 hours of instruction in ABE classes (204 students), 12 percent passed the GED, 57 percent were continuing their study toward the GED, and 4 percent transferred back to the traditional school. These data indicate a 27 percent noncompletion rate. A one-year follow-up study was conducted on the Adult Dropout Project students who were enrolled in the Adult Learning Center during the 1979-80 school year. Of the 144 students, 84 (58 percent) were contacted. From that group it was found that 26 percent had passed the GED, 31 percent were continuing their studies for the GED, and 12 percent had returned to the traditional high school. These data indicate a 31 percent noncompletion rate.

ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Alternative high schools, also called high school equivalency (HSE) programs, offer opportunities for noncompleters to earn a high school diploma. The programs are often under the sponsorship of public school districts; however, community colleges and technical schools are now beginning to offer them. Eligible adults include persons with either excessive absenteeism or a demonstrated inability to cope in the traditional school environment, persons who dropped out of school, and persons presently enrolled in traditional high schools but unable to take desired courses due to scheduling conflicts.

These schools usually provide for flexible, individualized scheduling of educational programs, career education and job skill training, basic skills instruction, college preparatory level courses, counseling, and job placement. Local districts offer HSE programs free or at reduced cost several evenings a week, usually using public school classrooms and employing part-time administrators and teachers, many of whom work in the day schools. State tax-levy monies and, very occasionally, local funds are used to supplement federal funds available through amendments to the 1966 Adult Education Act.

Although alternative high school programs were originally established and designed to serve the learning needs of older adults, Smith (1984) suggested that there is a discernible and accelerating trend toward an increasing proportion of youthful learners enrolling in the programs. She also indicated that many continuing educators view the trend warily, fearful that high schools may be "dumping" their intractable students into publicly supported programs for adults—programs that tend to be overcrowded and underfunded. Also, continuing educators may fear that the disruptive behavior of the youth will drive away older adult students and even staff who may fear the crime and vandalism committed by unemployed, out-of-school youth. Few alternative high school programs exist that were designed primarily for out-of-school youthful noncompleters. One such program was selected and reviewed in a case-history analysis. This program is presented below.

The Career Intern Program

The Career Intern Program (CIP) was established in 1972 by the Opportunities Industrialization Centers (OICs) as a possible solution for the often hard-to-reach out-of-school youthful noncompleters from very low-income and multiproblem families. The OIC system is a national network of skills-training and employment-development agencies with a central headquarters in Philadelphia. The CIP grew out of OIC's concern that their successful adult programs did not extend far enough down the age ladder to effect systematic changes in the economic/social system. Therefore, the original goals for the CIP were both to provide a specific service to young people and to demonstrate a model that could alter the paradigm of secondary education.

The CIP program was developed and tested in the early and middle 1970s by Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America (OIC/A) as an alternative high school program for high school noncompleters and students at high risk of not completing a secondary education. In its

developmental site, Philadelphia, the CIP provided disadvantaged youth with academic instruction to motivate them to complete high school and with career-orientation activities to ease their transition from school to work or further education. Evaluation of the CIP in Philadelphia found that it had a significant positive impact on young people's academic achievement and postsecondary experience (Treadway et al. 1981).

In June 1977, the Joint Dissemination Review Panel of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Education Division approved CIP as a validated exemplary program. Later that year, the OIC/A received funding from the Department of Labor (DOL) through the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA) to begin replicating the model in four new demonstration sites. The replication effort sought to determine if CIP could be replicated in new sites at reasonable cost within a reasonable period of time. The OIC/A and the four selected sites were granted $5,684,000 over a 33-month period to conduct the program and to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the results. The evaluation found that changes had been made in some CIP practices to accommodate local situations; however, the new sites retained their commitment to the program goals and practices of the CIP prototype. It concluded that there had been concrete examples of young lives redirected toward higher achievement, greater social responsibility, and enhanced personal satisfaction. "The CIP's replicability, in terms of its fundamental functions, has been solidly demonstrated in three sites" (Treadway et al. 1981, p. xii). Because of its demonstrated success in redirecting the lives of out-of-school, disadvantaged, youthful noncompleters, and its demonstrated replicability, the original CIP was selected for review in this section. Information to compile the review was drawn from two sources: Langsdort and Gibboney 1977; Treadway et al. 1981.

An Overview of the CIP

In 1972, the CIP was a career-oriented, alternative secondary-education program that had three basic goals. First, it sought to provide academic instruction that would enable noncompleters or potential noncompleters to meet local high school graduation criteria. Second, it sought to enhance the academic curriculum both by "infusing" career-related content and references into the academic subjects and by providing individual and group instruction and counseling on career issues, career-planning activities, and work-site exposure. These activities were designed to acquaint interns (students) with the world of work, its opportunities and constraints, and the avenue into career fields. Third, the CIP attempted to instill in interns the motivation to apply the skills and knowledge they acquired in the program in making successful transitions to postsecondary careers, formal education, or technical/ vocational training likely to enhance their continued personal, professional, and economic growth and satisfaction. The program sought to achieve attitudinal changes in interns from the CIP's supportive personal attention, the understanding of career issues they acquired, and the success they experienced in completing the program. Post-graduation contact was maintained for a year or more to provide moral support for continued accomplishment.

The experiences interns received in the CIP were comprehensive and attempted to put into practice one of the OIC system mottos: "Deal with the whole person." Therefore, the program staff tended to be concerned with an intern's entire situation: academic progress, issues at home, needs for social services or income-producing jobs, and so on. These experiences were delivered to interns via five program components—instruction, counseling, "Hands-on" career exposure, diagnosis/assessment, and climate—that were perceived by interns as interrelated aspects of a cohesive, comprehensive program.

Classroom Instruction. Instruction comprised the CIP's cognitive learning activities, which were mostly classroom-based but also included field trips, independent research, and other types of activities. The instruction was individualized in terms of strategies for learning, materials used, pace,

and other characteristics. It was tailored to the needs, interests, and learning style of each intern. To accomplish this level of individualization, CIP instructors were expected to use a variety of techniques appropriate to each intern. Class sizes were limited to 15 interns.

Counseling. Counseling was provided in a variety of areas in order to meet the needs of interns. These needs ranged from academic issues such as planning courses of study to meet graduation requirements, to intimate personal issues such as family relationships or drug use. In some cases, counseling entailed referral to outside social-service agencies for special needs, as well as in-house sessions. Individual counseling was conducted formally every two weeks, and on an as-needed basis whenever an intern wished. Group counseling was also held regularly. Counselors' case loads could not exceed 35 interns.

Career planning. Career planning was a major focus of counseling; however, the career area was approached through a combination of instruction, counseling, and first-hand exposure. The Career Counseling Seminar (CCS) was a class required of all interns in the first term of their program. The CCS was taught jointly by instructors, counselors, and career developers. An intern completed the CCS requirement by preparing in-depth research reports about two career fields. An individual Career Development Plan (CDP) was developed by each intern with a counselor upon beginning the program and was used throughout the intern's tenure as an assessment and planning tool. The CDP was a written record of the intern's career plans that profiled his/her aptitudes and included the strengths and weaknesses that emerged from the testing (which will be discussed in more detail later). The CDP was reviewed regularly in individual counseling sessions, and in assessment meetings with parents. As the intern continued through the program, the CDP was adjusted to reflect changes in career interest.

Hands-on. The "Hands-on" component provided interns with exposure to real work situations. Interns went on two-week Hands-ons after they had completed their career counseling seminar (CCS) requirements. The Hands-on providers could request that interns just observe what happened at a work station (i.e., "shadow" regular employees) or actually do some work. The intent was to show the intern what work really consisted of in some field of interest. Interns wrote reports describing their experiences and reactions after completing their Hands-on. Finding providers for Hands-on was primarily the responsibility of career developers.

Diagnosis/assessment. Diagnosis/assessment encompassed a variety of activities, related by their common purposes of ascertaining interns' needs, determining how well interns were doing, and planning interventions to meet problems. Formal diagnoses were conducted by instructors and counselors when an intern first entered the CIP to plan his/her program. Assessment occurred periodically through mid- and end-of-the-year reports and in meetings with parents and regular staff meetings called "disposition conferences." These meetings provided a forum for all staff members to discuss interns. By bringing together the whole professional staff, information about interns could be shared and plans made on the basis of complete knowledge of all aspects of an intern's progress. Confidentiality was observed about sensitive matters an intern did not want disclosed widely. The function of continuous diagnosis/ assessment was to assure that interns' progress was closely monitored and their needs met.

Climate. The program attempted to develop a climate of purposeful growth in which interns could learn and grow in an atmosphere of caring, motivating, stable, and nurturing concern. The function of "climate" was to demonstrate the program's concern and support for interns and to motivate their attendance and determination to complete the program and succeed in post-graduation experiences. The program's leadership and staff attitudes, and influences external to the program were all critically important factors affecting the establishment and maintenance of climate.

Enabling components of the CIP

The five program components just described provided the experiences that had direct impact on interns. To provide these experiences, there were several "enabling" components that created the foundation upon which the experiences were built. These consisted of the staff qualifications and roles; the curriculum, career education, and instructional materials; recruitment and intake; the CIP's relations with the schools, the teachers' union, and the community in general; and the budgetary outlay for the program.

Staff qualifications and roles. The director's primary role was leadership: clarifying CIP's objectives, enlisting the support of staff and outside resources to accomplish these objectives, and building morale to sustain both students and staff efforts. As the operational head of the CIP, the director was expected to coordinate the activities of the CIP units, make decisions affecting policy and practice, and facilitate communication among staff. The director also served as a primary channel for communication between the CIP staff and the larger organization, i.e., OICs/A. As a master teacher, counselor, and educational leader, the director spent a great deal of time in the classroom and with staff on instructional matters.

The instructional supervisor was responsible for curriculum development, inservice education, and the resource center (library). The instructional department was composed of eight teachers. The basic responsibility of this department was the instruction of interns in four academic subjects (English, social studies, mathematics, and science) and in a number of electives. The resource center housed information relevant to course materials and independent study. It was designed as a clearinghouse for all materials used by interns, counselors, and staff. It was also a place where interns gathered to read, or to pass their leisure time, and was available for independent study assignments.

The counseling supervisor was responsible for the counseling staff whose work embraced personal and career guidance. There were four personal counselors and four job developers who helped students with their personal problems, assisted them to plan and apply for post-high school education, and supported students' career development planning. The job developers also located work exploration opportunities, guided students through Hands-on experiences, and evaluated the interns' performance during placement.

Curriculum and career education. The curriculum was comprised of four subjects (i.e., English, social studies, mathematics, and science) that related to grades 10 to 12 of high school, and career education content. Ninety-seven packets in English, social studies, and science were developed, plus 43 lessons in mathematics. Each packet contained four to eight lessons, a pre- and posttest covering packet content, a series of readings and activities, and a list of optional enrichment activities.

The units for the first level of English, each unit serving as a focus for a learning packet, illustrate the integration of career, academic, and other content within a separate-subjects curriculum design.

English II

Career:	The Job Interview
	Communication Problems and Job Success
	Career Focusing
Academic:	Speaking and Listening
	Writing Better Sentences

Writing Better Paragraphs
Hope—the Afro-American Soul in Literature
Flight and Fear in Literature

Self: You, Your Language, and Careers

Community: Communication in the Community

The packets were developed by outside consultants working with the CIP staff. Packet content was designed to appeal to students who were not motivated (or experienced) in working on their own and who had difficulty with academic content. A student who used only packet material could master at least the basic content, although going beyond the basics was encouraged. Teachers used the packets in a way that best fitted their teaching styles, and they were encouraged to supplement the packet content with "active, experiential learning" to avoid a workbook-drill approach in teaching.

Recruitment and intake. Through contacts with the counselors at the feeder schools, the CIP school district coordinator knew who were school noncompleters, or who were identified by the counselors as potential noncompleters. Potential noncompleters were those who had expressed disillusionment with the school, who had a consistent pattern of poor attendance, or who had serious academic problems. After the names of potential and actual noncompleters were received, the school district coordinator often went to the schools and reviewed their records. From these records and from discussions with the school counselors, the coordinator decided whether or not a given student might benefit from attending CIP. Following this, a check was made to see if program-entry requirements were met, i.e., no major disciplinary problems and a minimum of 10th-grade education. The coordinator then submitted the names of qualified individuals to the CIP program specialist.

Walk-ins provided a second source of applicants. Youth and their parents who had heard of CIP walked in and requested to enroll. Referrals from locations other than the schools were a third and large source of applicants.

After the applicant list was developed, the program specialists sent letters to the parents of the prospective interns and requested that they telephone for an interview at CIP. Home visits were made in an attempt to locate parents who did not respond and those whose letters were returned unopened.

The next formal contact with prospective CIP applicants and their parents occurred after parents or applicants notified CIP of their interest. This interaction, called the "intake interview," was conducted by a member of the counseling department and a member of the external evaluation team. The objective of the interview, involving both applicant and parent(s), was to explain the nature of the CIP and the benefits that could be derived from enrollment.

Immediately following the interview, while still at CIP, the applicant was asked to take the reading section of the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT), Advanced Battery, to determine an entry-level reading ability. If the score was at the fifth-grade level or higher, the minimum entry requirements were met and the applicant was asked to take a battery of additional tests. (The tests included the SAT math and reading tests; Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices, test of nonverbal reasoning; Rotter's Internal-External Scale; Coopersmith's Self-Esteem Inventory; and Super's Career Development Inventory. Entrance into the program was not predicated upon test scores. The tests and inventories provided a baseline for assessing later intern achievement and attitude change in comparison with a control group.)

Relationships with staff, local schools, and the community. The staff relationships and expectations experienced in CIP differed from the teacher union-negotiated agreements experienced in many traditional schools. Some but not all of the staff of the Career Intern Program met certification requirements for Pennsylvania. The general philosophy of OIC/A was to hire instructors who understood the problems of interns. While few of the instructors had significant experience teaching in public schools, virtually all of them had worked with youth, had been in other OIC training programs, or in some way had had first-hand experience with disadvantaged minorities.

Interaction with the local schools was complex. There were various state and local requirements about teacher and counselor certification that had to be met. The CIP curriculum had to be reviewed by local education agency (LEA) officials to determine if they met established high school graduation requirements. Also, agreement had to be reached on the definitions and procedures to identify "actual" and "potential" noncompleters. Reaching specific agreements with the local boards of education took months of negotiations, and approval of credit award took even longer.

Alternative programs such as CIP need substantial community support and cooperation. Cooperation is essential in order to facilitate the identification of prospective interns, the procurement of Hands-on experiences, and the placement of CIP graduates in college, job training programs, or jobs. The program utilized both formal and informal linkages to develop community support. Formal linkages were those that took place in an arranged manner, under explicit rules for cooperation. These linkages were developed primarily through the creation of Advisory Councils—groups of citizens representing various agencies and organizations in the local community. Informal linkages were those conducted on a one-on-one and frequently *ad hoc* basis, e.g., between an individual and his/her "contact" in another organization. These linkages played a critical role in the implementation of CIP. For example, counselors developed contacts with a variety of agencies, e.g., the Department of Social Services, the Bureau of Child Welfare, probation departments and juvenile courts, drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers, and nonprofit organizations. These contacts supplied the CIP with both referrals of prospective interns and support for those enrolled.

Budgetary outlay. The CIP had considerable time and money to develop its curriculum. Between March 1973 and June 1976, CIP received a total of $2,990,901 from the National Institute of Education. About $585,000 (or 20 percent of these funds) went to Gibboney Associates for the formative and summative evaluations. About $2,331,000 (or 78 percent) was spent on instructional and counseling services for approximately 900 youth. About $75,000 (or 3 percent) went for curriculum development. During the development period (from 1972 to 1976), some full-time staff, equivalent to about $25,000, were working on curriculum refinement. A group of consultants also developed individualized learning packages under a $50,000 subcontract.

The cost per student from March 1975 through February 1976 was about $2,732 based on an 11-month school year for the program (or $248 per student month). In comparison, Gibboney Associates estimated that a general or academic student in the 1974-75 school year at Philadelphia's Germantown High School (a primary feeder school for the CIP) cost about $170 per student month. Program staff estimated that in Philadelphia as a whole, the academic or general student cost was about $155 per student month and for a vocational student it was $233 per student month. In two private Philadelphia senior high schools the costs per student month were $277 and $293.

The Effectiveness of CIP

The evaluation design to determine the effectiveness of CIP consisted of two randomly chosen groups. The groups were chosen after they had completed interviews, taken achievement and

attitude tests, and otherwise completed the preenrollment procedures. No applicant knew in advance whether they would be placed in the experimental (CIP) or control (those not admitted) groups. The experimental nature of the program and the use of random assignment were explained to all applicants and their parents during the preenrollment process. Students were enrolled (and control groups formed) at three times during the period covered in the report: January 1974, June 1974 (CIP operated for a summer semester), and February 1975. Most of the interns had completed the program by February 1976. Data were collected to test the short-term (first 10 weeks), intermediate (first 9 months in the program), and longer-term (6 months after graduation) effects of the program. Follow-up studies were initiated on as many interns as possible who had completed the program prior to December 1975 and on the control group. Only the intermediate and long-term effects will be reported in this monograph.

Characteristics of applicants. During the evaluation period, 502 students applied to the CIP and 310 interns were admitted. The applicants ranged in age from 14 to 24. Over half of all applicants (250) were 17 or younger. Forty percent had permanently left school, and 20 percent were still enrolled but had such poor attendance records that they had in effect left school. Of the 305 applicants still in school, 154 were men, and of the 197 not enrolled in high school 100 were males. Therefore, men were slightly more likely to apply for the program than women.

Most (65 percent) of the applicants were either failing during the semester prior to leaving school or failing before they applied. On average the applicants were deficient in four academic units, or one year behind their age-mates in high school. In terms of their performance on achievement tests, the intake assessments and data from feeder schools suggested the following:

- The average reading level (7.1 grade level) was slightly lower than the average mathematics achievement (7.3 grade level), and both levels were an average of four years below the national norm for students in their grade levels.

- Fifty-five percent of the applicants tested at the low end of the scale (6.9 or lower) in reading, and 47 percent were on the low end of the scale in mathematics.

- Of the 404 applicants who took the intelligence test, 65 percent of the group scored average or better than most high school students.

- Scores from the locus of control measure indicated that about one-third of the applicants had a sense of external (luck/influence) versus internal (my abilities and energy) control, about 30 percent indicated they felt control rested with them, and about 40 percent believed that society was not a place where anyone could succeed through hard work, but was a place where individuals could exercise limited influence on their lives.

- The applicants did not tend to report trouble with their families. Only about one-third assessed family relationships negatively and most of these felt only slightly negative.

- In terms of general self-esteem, most of the applicants assessed their self-worth positively, i.e., 29 percent above average and 39 percent average.

- In terms of academic self-esteem, most of the applicants assessed themselves as students negatively: 40 percent very negatively, 38 percent negatively.

- Sixty-three percent possessed below average career information, and 12 percent were above average.

- Thirty-seven percent had above average planning ability and 33 percent were below average.

Intermediate effects of the program. The effectiveness of the program to retain students was tested 9 months after participants had been accepted in the program. Comparisons with the control group showed that only 7 percent of the 145 youth who had completed the preenrollment procedures for CIP but were not selected by lottery for enrollment, had completed high school. Of the 286 youth who had been selected at random from the same applicant pool, 44 percent had received their high school diploma. One-third of CIP enrollees, who had previously been enrolled in school, left the program before graduating (a 73 percent retention rate). Of those CIP enrollees who at the time of application were not enrolled in school, 42 percent left before graduating (a 58 percent retention rate). In comparison, 86 percent of the control group were noncompleters (38 percent had been in school, but left, and 49 percent were out of school and did not reenter). During this same period, 6 percent of the control group and 23 percent of the interns were still enrolled in school. Of these, 3 percent and 10 percent respectively, had transferred to schools other than the one in which they were enrolled at the time of application.

Also during this period, interns showed improvements in rates of attendance (70 percent minimum attendance was required), keeping appointments, rescheduling appointments, completing assignments, developing test-taking skills, working together, taking initiative, paying attention to classwork, expressing willingness to repeat failed courses, and demonstrating seriousness about school work. In terms of reading and mathematics achievement, the interns gained five academic months in reading (a pretest average of 7.2 and a posttest average of 7.7) in an average of eight months in CIP. In mathematics, their gain was from 7.3 to 7.7. In comparison, the average scores of the control students did not change. About 70 percent of the applicants initially read below the eighth-grade level. At posttesting, about 70 percent of control students were still performing below this level, and the percentage of CIP participants performing below this level in reading and mathematics had dropped to about 58 percent. Interns also retained their strong feelings of general self-worth and increased their positive self-perceptions as students. Interns also increased their career planning and utilization of resources.

Postprogram follow-up. The biggest difference CIP made was in enabling youth to continue their education. Almost one-third of the male and 50 percent of the female graduates were in either technical school or college. In contrast, none of the men and only 31 percent of the women in the control group were continuing their education. An additional 4 percent of men and 12 percent of women in the control group were in high school. About 57 percent of the men and 31 percent of the women in the control group were neither in school nor employed, compared to 29 percent of male and 24 percent of female interns.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Out-of-school youthful noncompleters possess characteristics and have sociocultural experiences that suggest that they are poor candidates for school completion, i.e., low academic achievement/ability, inability to function adequately in the social context of schooling, home and family environments that are not academically stimulating, and a tendency to make poor course selections and to take fewer credits. Federally funded employment and training demonstration projects have provided important insights into the types of macro-programmatic approaches that are most effective in providing education and employment to different segments of the out-of-school youthful noncompleter population. Other major efforts include adult literacy programs and alternative high schools. However, the efforts of all three types of programs appear to be peripheral to their efforts to serve other clients—adult high school graduates and more manageable secondary school students.

The results of the literature review suggest that few of the programs that have existed in the past or those currently operating have resulted from careful research, nor were they designed to test the specific effects of efforts implemented on the local level. Consequently, what we know about "what works" and "why it works" with this population has resulted from an analysis of those few locally based programs that have provided written comprehensive descriptions of their programmatic efforts.

As illustrated in the three preceding case histories, successful programs represent a balance of complex, diverse, and interacting program elements. The remainder of this section summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the programs presented in the case histories, identifies their similarities and makes recommendations for their replication, and makes recommendations for enhancing the employment and education opportunities of out-of-school youthful noncompleters.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Successful Programs

The case histories of successful programs presented represent the types of programmatic descriptions that can be readily located in the literature. Given the population that they attempted to serve, they appear to represent some of the best efforts that provided enough information to attempt replication. They are by no means without weaknesses. Some of the primary strengths and weaknesses of the programs are identified in this section.

The Youth Chance Program

The Youth Chance program demonstrated the efficacy of a nonresidential occupational skills training program that focused on the needs of youthful noncompleters for psychological counseling, job development, and the integration of education and training. The program provided an unsystematic counseling approach that allowed students to discuss their school, personal, and job problems and an emphasis on both job training during the program and job placement upon

completion of the program. The program illustrated several strengths: (1) a diverse funding base, that is, a combination of government and philanthropic funding sources; (2) linkages with community agencies and potential employers of participants; (3) a policy of open admissions/tight regulations that imposed and enforced clear, stringent rules; (4) paid employment under the supervision of a trained supervisor; (5) emphasis on employment skills (job searches, job development, workshops, and so forth); (6) six- to nine-month program cycles that provided some time for students to absorb the knowledge, skills, and values taught and experienced in the program; and (7) an educational component that focused on improving the employability, self-esteem, and skill needs of participants through several approaches: a 6-to-1 student/teacher ratio, meetings of staff to discuss the needs and problems of individual students, academic preparation tied to work roles and the content of job functions, and so on.

This program's primary weakness was its tendency to rely on staff to help learners meet their needs rather than helping learners "learn how to learn" by taking responsiblity for their own learning. The program could have benefited from approaches that would foster self-directed learning, such as having students submit written weekly contracts (which could provide a weekly statement of goals, a schedule of activities, and a method for reporting progress for each student) and write 25 words per day in a journal. Such assignments could help participants enhance their writing skills and further develop their abilities to reflect critically on their educational and work experiences.

A second weakness in the program was the lack of a comprehensive system of student and staff support. The students often bring with them many complex personal, family, and financial problems, and the faculty and staff can easily become burned out by attempting to be simultaneously work supervisors, teachers, and counselors. A more feasible approach would have been for the program to develop a comprehensive support system of counseling opportunities that would carefully monitor the professional and personal concerns of the staff and students. A third weakness of the program was its failure to develop a comprehensive plan for evaluating the effects of the programmatic effort. The effects of the program are largely speculative given the lack of random assignment of pre- and posttest treatment and control groups.

The Adult Education Dropout Project

The Adult Education Dropout Project demonstrated the feasibility of reducing the number of youthful noncompleters in the general population by helping them to take advantage of adult literacy programs as an alternative to traditional high schools. The project demonstrated several strengths: (1) a comprehensive referral system that placed the responsiblity for the identification, contact, and referral of youthful noncompleters on a diverse group of individuals and agencies interested in the plight of youthful noncompleters, and (2) the techniques of involving secondary school personnel in the governance and operations of adult education programs, e.g., placement on advisory board, opportunities to visit the program, periodic progress reports on students, and so on.

While the referral efforts increased the number of youthful noncompleters in the adult education program by about 100 percent, the instructional program was not initially designed to meet the learning needs of these learners. Therefore, the program tended to adjust, on a trial-and-error basis, the structure of its instructional efforts to meet the learning needs of youthful noncompleters. It appears that the program could benefit from more careful planning to make the faculty, staff, and students more sensitive to the unique learning needs of these learners. For example, the program could have developed weekly learning contracts, assigned journals, and developed a more structured counseling support system for students and staff. In addition, future efforts should plan to facilitate the needs of a large influx of youth in programs originally designed for older learners. These efforts

should include staff development training for existing staff, the addition of counselors and other specific staff if they are not currently available, additional learning materials that are of specific interest to youth, and separate classes for adults and youth.

The Career Intern Program

The Career Intern Program demonstrated the ability of an innovative labor market preparation program to develop and implement an effective alternative high school that targets the needs of both in-school at-risk youth and out-of-school youthful noncompleters. The program demonstrated several strengths: (1) motivating learning climate and strong academic instruction to enable disadvantaged youth to complete high school; (2) career-oriented instruction and activities—a Career Development Plan, the Career Counseling Seminar, "Hands-ons," continuous diagnosis/assessment, and others, that were integrated into the students' curriculum to help ease the transition from school to work; (3) individualized instruction that used instructional techniques such as field trips and independent research and was tailored to the needs, interests, and learning styles of each learner; (4) emphasis on the emotional needs of each learner, and flexibility for learners to pursue either the GED or a high school diploma or to reenroll in the traditional school; (5) the maintenance of a low student/teacher and student/counselor ratio to ensure that each student received personalized services; (6) a program philosophy that recognized the students as trustworthy individuals and contributed to students' sense of security, acceptance, and self-confidence; and (7) two comprehensive evaluation designs that carefully tested the results of the project and efforts to replicate its results, and two comprehensively written reports of the project's results and its demonstrated replicability.

The primary weakness of this program was its failure to acquire more diversified and stable funding. The original program was discontinued by the Philadelphia School Board shortly after the demonstration project monies were terminated. A broader funding base and a stronger commitment of resources from state and/or local sources would have increased this important program's chances for survival.

Recommendations for Replicating Programs

This analysis suggests that the programs tended to respond in different ways to the various characteristics, needs, and interests of out-of-school youthful noncompleters. Some of the general and specific characteristics and activities associated with at least one of the programs have been summarized and categorized according to the learner needs they primarily serve (see Table 3). The extent to which each characteristic/activity seems to be necessary for success and replicability is also indicated. A school system or program wishing to adopt the various characteristics and activities of the programs or to adapt them should try to provide as many of those listed as possible.

Recommendations for Enhancing Employment and Education Opportunities

As indicated, educational programs aimed at meeting the multiple needs of disadvantaged youth are expensive, require extensive cooperation with other local agencies, and tend to lack careful research/evaluation designs. The following recommendations suggest ways in which these problems can and should be addressed.

TABLE 3

SUGGESTIONS FOR REPLICATION: THE MATCH BETWEEN NONCOMPLETERS' CHARACTERISTICS AND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

Characteristics of Noncompleters	Characteristics/Components of Successful Programs	Necessary for Success	Replicable
1. Low academic achievement/ability	a. Individualized and small group instruction	Yes	Yes
	b. Small teacher/student ratio	Yes	Yes
	c. Teachers and staff who believe students can achieve	Yes	Probably
	d. Students required to set specific goals	Probably	Probably
	e. Students provided with a major role in planning their own learning efforts	Probably	Probably
	f. Students required to write research papers and other assignments	Yes	Probably
	g. Career-oriented instruction and instructional materials relevant to the needs and interests of learners	Yes	Probably
2. Inability to function adequately in the social context of schooling	a. Climate of the program encourages and motivates learners	Yes	Probably
	b. Staff requires and gives respect	Yes	Probably
	c. Program provides clear rules that are stringently enforced	Yes	Yes
	d. Program structured to help students to work together constructively	Yes	Yes

TABLE 3 *continued*

SUGGESTIONS FOR REPLICATION: THE MATCH BETWEEN NONCOMPLETERS' CHARACTERISTICS AND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

Characteristics of Noncompleters	Characteristics/Components of Successful Programs	Necessary for Success	Replicable
3. Home and family environments that are not academically stimulating	a. Involvement of parents in the educational process	No	Yes
	b. Career counseling and focus on occupational competence	Probably	Probably
	c. Staff meetings to discuss the needs and problems of individual students	Probably	Yes
	d. Availability of a resource center	Probably	Probably
	e. Occupational exposure to different types of jobs	Probably	Probably
	f. Long program cycles (i.e., over 1-year)	Probably	Yes
4. Tendency to make poor course selections and take fewer credits	a. Personal and academic counseling with low student/counselor ratio	Yes	Yes
	b. Close relationship between course content and individual career plans	Probably	Probably
	c. Trust in students to plan their own programs	Yes	Yes
	d. School experiences that are congruent with realistic life goals	Probably	Probably

First, successful ongoing programs and demonstrations should be provided a guarantee of continuous funding (minimum of 4- to 5-year cycles) from federal, state, and/or local sources, as long as programs can demonstrate their continuing success with this population. Such funding guarantees would significantly improve the highly volatile nature that has characterized the funding for many programs that have demonstrated their success in serving the needs of out-of-school youthful noncompleters.

Second, a point system should be created that increasingly rewards financially those programs that successfully recruit and retain out-of-school youthful noncompleters in their programs. Such a system could provide an incentive for employment and training programs, adult literacy programs, and alternative high school programs to prioritize their service delivery to meet the needs of this often neglected population.

Third, future programs should be encouraged to develop strong formal and informal linkages with community-based organizations in order to address two of the major underlying problems of youthful noncompleters: low family income, and a life-style and family history of social isolation. Therefore, the programs should attempt to develop strong linkages between family, school, and employment settings in order to build social integration into these various settings.

Fourth, the loose network of employment and education programs that serve youthful noncompleters should be strengthened to form a comprehensive network of services to this population. Currently, government employment and training programs, adult literacy programs, and alternative high school programs each appear to work in a relatively isolated sphere of influence in which they have developed specialized expertise in meeting some of the needs of youthful noncompleters. Through comprehensive collaborative networks, the expertise developed by each type of program can be made available to other types of programs. Such collaboration has the potential of providing a cost-effective means of greatly increasing the number of youthful noncompleters receiving needed services.

Fifth, more research should be encouraged to develop a greater understanding of the appeal different types of programs have for various segments of youthful noncompleters. However, the programs should be carefully designed from research findings and by persons experienced in working successfully with youthful noncompleters. Those projects designed for demonstration purposes should be jointly designed by both program planners and project evaluators. The roles with potential for conflicts of interest, such as managing both program implementation and project evaluation, should be assigned to different agencies or a different unit of a single agency.

Appendix

Materials from the Adult Education Dropout Project

ADULT EDUCATION DROPOUT PROJECT

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We in Adult Basic Education believe that it is best for young adults, 16 to 18 years of age, to remain in high school.

We believe that the total high school experience offers many opportunities that the single Adult Basic Education class does not afford. We feel that the secondary school environment allows for the gradual maturing of the student, as well as providing a well rounded curriculum which helps prepare the student for adult responsibilities.

The Adult Education Dropout Project was developed to facilitate only the confirmed dropout. The program was designed to serve those students who, after all retention and counseling techniques have been exhausted, will not continue in high school. The Adult Education Dropout Project may be viewed as a viable alternative for the confirmed dropout who would not or could not otherwise complete his/her high school education.

"WHAT IS ADULT BASIC EDUCATION?"

Telephone Script

CALLER: "Hello (Name of Student). I'm calling from (name of organization)."

"Our records show that you have withdrawn from (name of high school)."

(PAUSE BRIEFLY FOR RESPONSE . . . THEN CONTINUE)

CALLER: "Let me tell you about an exciting program that was designed just for you. Through the Adult Basic Education Program you may enroll in day or evening classes, set your own schedule, attend classes in your own neighborhood, get individualized instruction, and prepare for G.E.D testing."

(PAUSE)

"And all this is free!"

"If you would like more information about this program or other alternative programs, call (program's number), or visit the Adult Learning Center at (program's address). Let me give that number again. It's (program's number)."

HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT REFERRAL

High School _____

Date _____

_____ *is being referred to Adult Basic education classes to*
Student's name

study toward eventual GED Testing. This student has permission to take the GED test when he/she is academically prepared to do so.

_____
School Official's Signature and Title

DROPOUT REFERRAL PROGRESS REPORT

To: _____

From: _____

Date: _____

Each of the following students has been referred by a local High School into the Adult Basic Education Program.

This report reflects data accumulated during the month of _____.

Name	ENROLLMENT DATE	REFERRAL HIGH SCHOOL	ATTENDANCE			PROGRESS			COMMENTS
			STEADY	PERIODIC	NOT ATTENDING	GOOD	FAIR	NONE	
1.									
2.									
3.									
4.									
5.									
6.									
7.									
8.									
9.									
10.									
11.									

ABE STUDENT FOLLOW-UP FORM

SITE: _____

INSTRUCTOR: _____

Each student who, without prior notification, has missed over three consecutive class meetings should be contacted.

NAME	PHONE	FIRST CONTACT	SECOND CONTACT	THIRD CONTACT	WITHDRAWAL DATE
1.	_____	Date: Response:	Date: Response:	Date: Response:	
2.	_____	Date: Response:	Date: Response:	Date: Response:	
3.	_____	Date: Response:	Date: Response:	Date: Response:	
4.	_____	Date: Response:	Date: Response:	Date: Response:	
5.	_____	Date: Response:	Date: Response:	Date: Response:	

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